

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, May 3, 1996

**Message on the Observance of
Eid al-Adha**

April 26, 1996

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Eid al-Adha.

An observance of sacrifice and a celebration of faith, Eid al-Adha is a sacred day for Muslims in our nation and around the world. On this special day, the entire global Muslim community joins in spirit with those who have traveled to Mecca to complete the Hajj.

The Festival of the Sacrifice reminds all of us of the need for obedience to God, prompts us to reflect on God's mercy, and gives participants a welcome opportunity to join with friends and family in a community celebration of faith. In commemorating this holy day, Muslims in America and in countries around the world serve as a source of strong faith that can enrich our lives and strengthen our common values.

Best wishes for a memorable and meaningful observance.

Bill Clinton

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Remarks at a Democratic Reception
in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

April 26, 1996

Thank you very much. Come on up, Congressman—give Congressman Borski a hand for going to his daughter's soccer game. Give him a hand. *[Applause]*

One of the things you need to know if you're in public life is how to make a proper entrance. *[Laughter]* And Bob just qualified. Actually, I saw him this morning. We were both out running at Fort McNair in Washington, DC, and he said he'd be here tonight. And I thank him for keeping his word.

Thank you, Congressman Chaka Fattah, for that powerful introduction and for your great service. Thank you, Congressman Tom Foglietta, for your friendship and your support. Thank you, Gussie, and thank you, Mina Baker Knoll, and thank you, Joe Kohn.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman Fowler, for all the endless nights that you go back and forth across America in search of the magical chemistry of victory, not just for our party and our candidates, but for the kind of America we're fighting for. And thank you, Mr. Mayor, for proving that the Democratic Party can be the party of the future and the party of all the people, the party of compassion and competence, the party of the mind, and the party of the heart. Thank you all.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am deeply moved by this large outpouring. As President Kennedy used to say, I am deeply touched, but not so deeply touched as you are tonight. *[Laughter]* I thank you for your support, and I thank you for your commitment to your city, your State, and your country. Pennsylvania and Philadelphia have been very, very good to me. And as all of you know, this State and this part of our State has a special place in my wife's heart and her family history. And we're delighted always, either one of us, to have a chance to come.

I think you know why we're here, or you wouldn't be here. But let me just say again very briefly, when I ran for President in 1992 and the State of Pennsylvania gave Bill Clinton and Al Gore its electoral votes, when Philadelphia gave our ticket a larger margin than President Kennedy received here in 1960, we had a very straightforward vision for our country, a vision for what we wanted America to look like in the 21st century and what we wanted America to be like for all the children that are here.

First, we wanted a country where every person who is willing to work for it, without regard to their race, their income, or their background, could have a chance to live out

their dreams. Second, we wanted a country that was coming together, not being driven apart; that was reaching across the racial and other lines that divide us to find strength in our diversity and our shared values. Third, I wanted to see our country continue to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity and security, so that we could build a framework for the 21st century that would free our children of the worries that two World Wars and the cold war imposed upon generation after generation after generation of Americans in the 20th century.

In short, I really believed that if we did the right thing, the new global economy could open up the greatest age of possibility our people have ever known. I still believe that. And what I come to you to say is that we have a record that we can be proud of. Together we've done what we said we'd do in 1992. But it is a record to build on, not a record to sit on. It is a record to go forward from, and not a record to take a radical turn away from. That is what is at stake here.

The American people in a way are fortunate in this election year. In 1992, there was a big debate about change or the status quo. That's not what is at stake in 1996. In 1996, there are two very different visions of change that offer us two roads into the 21st century. And the next 4 years, like it or not, are going to take us right into the next century. The question is, which road are we going to walk into the 21st century? That is the question the American people will determine.

Will we walk the road of those who say that Government is the problem in America and the only thing we need to do is to give the American people freedom from their Government? Or will we walk with those of us who believe that we need a smaller and less bureaucratic Government, but Government has a role to play to make sure that every American has a chance to make it, that every family has a chance to make it, that every neighborhood and every community has a chance to live up to the fullest of their God-given capacities?

I think those of us who want to go forward together will prevail in 1996 because of you, and I know that you know that, or you wouldn't be here. And we don't have to guess

about what will happen. You know where I am and what I will do. You know where they are and what they will do. You know that our approach produced a deficit that is less than half of what it was in 1992 when we took office, 8½ million more jobs, a real crime bill instead of 6 years of talking about it. It's putting 100,000 police on the street and helping communities to drive the crime rate down to make our streets safer.

You know that it produced new and innovative approaches to protect the environment while growing the economy. You know that it produced a new commitment to the education of all of our children, from expanding the Head Start program to expanding the availability of affordable college loans, to the national service program that your former Senator, Harris Wofford, heads today. You know what we will do, and you know they oppose all those things.

You also know that I have done my best to reach across party lines to work with Republicans of good will; that I think this intense partisanship—the idea that everybody who is not in your party is the enemy of your future and the enemy of your country—is crazy; the idea that you should never work with people even if you agree with them on a specific issue because there might be some, God forbid, benefit to somebody in the other party, is wrong. That is not what made America great. There are enough differences that are honest without that kind of excessive partisanship.

And today I finally signed, 7 months late, a budget for this year that I would have signed 7 months ago. Why? It continues the reduction of the deficit; it continues to cut spending; but it protects education; it protects the protection of the environment; it protects Medicare; it protects Medicaid; it protects our investment in new technologies and the growth of jobs; and it protects the 100,000 police and the AmeriCorps program, all things—all things—that the other party tried in an intensely, completely partisan way to do away with. That was wrong.

But when we came back and rolled up our sleeves and worked together, we did what we should have done: keep that deficit coming down, continue to reduce the size of unnecessary Government, but protect our fu-

ture and protect our children and protect the things that bring us together instead of driving us apart. That is the way we ought to do things.

A couple of days ago I signed an antiterrorism bill—the same thing, passed in a completely bipartisan way to give us the tools to fight the kind of terrorism that we have seen in Oklahoma City, at the World Trade Center, in Japan, in the Middle East, indeed, all over the world, the use of murder of innocent civilians to achieve a political end. We did that in a bipartisan way by putting America first. That is what I represent and that's what our party will represent as long as I am the President of the United States, and that is what we ought to do.

So I ask you to keep these things in mind. This is an interesting world we're living in. It's full of unpredictable events. Just in the last few weeks we've seen the heartbreaking deaths of my friend, the Commerce Secretary, Ron Brown, and some of our finest young public servants and some of our finest business leaders going to Bosnia to try to put the power of the American economy behind saving the peace and tell those people, you have no future if you hate each other because of your religion or your ethnic background. And we are determined now to make something positive happen out of that, to use it to strengthen our ability to stand for peace.

We were afraid that the peace was being shattered in the Middle East with the fighting in southern Lebanon and northern Israel. But, thank God, today they reached an agreement to restore the cease-fire and to monitor violations and not to resort to that kind of killing again. And yesterday the Palestinians took out of their constitution the provision that required them to be against the very existence of the state of Israel. This was a good day, a good week for peace in the Middle East and moving forward again.

And on the trip I took to Korea and Japan and Russia, let me remind you, it may seem like a long way away, but when I took office the number one threat to America's security was said to be the development of a nuclear program by North Korea and the prospect that they would have nuclear weapons that could be used and could be sold to other countries. Now that is not even in the head-

lines anymore because they're keeping their word to build down their nuclear program. And we are committed to that.

In Japan, we've had 21 separate trade agreements with Japan, 21. And in those areas, everything from auto parts to cellular telephones to autos to rice, in all those areas our exports to Japan are up 85 percent and our trade deficit is going down. We are creating jobs with free and fair trade, doing the right thing by the American people, and maintaining our security partnership with Japan.

Let me tell you why I went to Russia and how it affects you. Because of the work that has been done with Russia as a democracy in the last 3 years, for the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age there is not a single, solitary nuclear missile pointed at an American child tonight. And I am proud of that and you should be proud of that.

But unfortunately, not all the dangers of the nuclear age are behind us. We have more work to do to reduce nuclear weapons further. And the waste that is left behind—the waste that is left behind could be used to make small bombs with many times the destructive power of the bomb that blew up the Federal building in Oklahoma City. So we have to work with them to make sure that all that is safe, that it cannot be stolen, that terrorists cannot get a hold of it.

So even these things that happen so far from home affect the way your children live on their streets and their neighborhoods and their schools and their future. That is why I say again, we have to do three things. Every person without regard to their race, their gender, their station in life has got to have a chance if they're willing to work for it. We have got—we have got to—fight these impulses that are dividing people all over the world by race, by religion, by ethnic groups and say, no, no, that's not what America is; America is leading our challenges together by sharing our values and working together.

And we've got to continue to be the force for peace and freedom and security in the world that only America can be. And we have to do it by saying this is what the Democrats stand for; not big Government solving all the problems, but a new, smaller, less bureaucratic Government, the smallest in 30 years,

but one still strong enough to help citizens and families and communities make the most of their own lives.

That is tomorrow's progressivism. That's what we stand for. And if any Republicans or independents want to help us, we are not going to be blindly partisan, we're going to say come on aboard, grab us by the hand, and walk into the future together.

Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. in Franklin Hall at the Franklin Institute. In his remarks, he referred to Gussie Clark, Philadelphia councilwoman; Mina Baker Knoll, candidate for State treasurer; Joe Kohn, State attorney general candidate; Don Fowler, chairman, Democratic National Committee; and Mayor Edward Rendell of Philadelphia. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

April 27, 1996

Good morning. This has been a very good week for America. On Friday I signed a bipartisan budget to keep the Government operating for the rest of the year. After a year of intense and sometimes heated debate, Republicans and Democrats in Congress came together and worked with us to craft an agreement that is good for the American people.

First of all, it keeps the deficit on the downward path we started in 1993. This budget cuts billions of dollars in spending. At the same time, the budget upholds America's most basic values, as I have pledged to do, by honoring our commitment to our elderly, to our children, and to our future by protecting Medicare and Medicaid, preserving our fight against crime, investing in education and in the protection of the environment.

Look how far we've come. A year ago, many in Congress insisted we could only move toward a balanced budget by imposing extreme measures and walking away from those commitments. I knew that wasn't true, and I was determined to hold the line. So now we aren't going to break our promise to put 100,000 new police officers on the street. We aren't going to stop enforcing anti-

pollution laws and risk severe damage to our environment. We aren't going to abandon our effort to shrink class size and raise teachers' standards, to keep kids in school safe and make college more affordable. We aren't going to abandon our commitment to AmeriCorps, our national service program, which also helps young people pay for college as they serve in their communities.

But here's what we are going to do: We are going to cut the deficit for the 4th year in a row. This is the first time that has happened in almost 50 years, since Harry Truman was President. We're on the way to a balanced budget. The deficit this year will be less than half of what it was when I took office. And now we've got to finish the job.

Earlier this year I proposed a plan to balance the budget, and Congress' own economists have certified that plan will balance the budget in 7 years. Republicans in Congress have their own balanced budget plan. If you laid my plan and their plan side by side, you would find enough cuts in common to both plans to balance the budget and provide a tax cut for working families. So the ingredients for a balanced budget are clearly at hand. All we have to do is sit down together and assemble a final agreement based on the things we already agree on.

But that's the problem. I have made it clear that I want to meet with Congress and work this out as soon as possible. I said this week I'm willing to meet with a large group of lawmakers or a small group of Republican and Democratic leaders. When Senator Dole said that maybe the two of us ought to get together and work it out, I told Senator Dole I'd be more than happy to meet with him alone. I don't care how we do it. My singular goal is to work together with the Republicans to craft a bipartisan plan to balance the budget in 7 years while upholding our values and our commitment to the future.

I'd like to take a minute to speak directly to the Republicans in Congress. I know some people in your party are urging you to reject bipartisan negotiation in favor of more partisan confrontation. That would be a terrible mistake. Let me be blunt. I refused to accept extreme proposals for the last year and a half, and I will not accept extreme proposals for the future. If it is your political strategy to

concoct a budget that you hope I will not sign, you ought to think again. If you torpedo these negotiations today, after so much progress has been made on a balanced budget, simply to create a campaign issue for later, the American people will see through that with their eyes closed.

So I urge you this morning to take the high road to progress. Do what we did with this year's budget, with the antiterrorism bill, with the telecommunications bill, with the lobby reform bill. Come meet with me and let's finish this job together. This is an historic chance to balance the budget. We're within inches of agreement, and nothing—not politics, not partisanship, not Presidential campaigns—nothing should be allowed to stop us.

Just about a year ago I gave a speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors. I told them then I did not want a pile of vetoes. I told them I wanted to work with Congress and get things done for the American people. But I also said I'd never accept extreme and unnecessary measures that would jeopardize our ability to care for our elderly, educate our children, and protect our environment. Unfortunately, a lot of Republicans in Congress didn't believe me. They shut the Government down. They refused to cooperate. But look what happened. When they tried to impose these drastic measures I was forced to stop them, just as I said I would. But then last week we worked together, and we quickly agreed on a budget plan that accomplishes what I said could be done all along: The deficit is going down, and our commitments are secure.

Today the Republican leaders in Congress face a similar choice. They can go it alone and we will end up going nowhere, or they can come on down to the White House and we will get a good job done for the American people together. That's how our system works best. That's how we should reform health care and help working families.

Every United States Senator, for example, every single one, 100 of them, voted to pass the bipartisan Kennedy-Kassebaum health care reform bill. Now, Republicans can work with us to make that health care more available to 43 million Americans by passing a bill that says that you ought to be able to

keep your health insurance if you change jobs or lose a job, and you ought not to be denied health insurance just because somebody in your family has been sick. We can agree on that, or the Republicans can send me a more partisan bill that has special provisions for special interests.

The Republican leadership can work with us to raise the minimum wage, or they can go on ignoring working families and moderates in their very own party, and do their best to obstruct even a vote on the minimum wage.

Now, if you look at what's been done that is good in the last year and 4 months—this year's budget, the antiterrorism bill, the telecommunications bill, the lobby reform—every single good thing has been done because Democrats and Republicans in Congress worked together and worked with me. That's how to get things done.

The only way for us to move forward is to do it together. That's the right thing to do on balancing the budget; the right thing to do on health care reform; the right thing to do on the minimum wage. That is what we are here for: to move America forward. So let's get together, and let's get to work.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:21 p.m. on April 26 at the DuPont Hotel in Wilmington, DE, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 27.

Remarks to the National Association of Realtors

April 27, 1996

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you, Art and Michael, Robert, Russ, ladies and gentlemen. Thanks for the warm welcome.

Audience member. Go, Bill! [Laughter]

Audience member. Four more years! [Laughter]

The President. Let me say that I've been trying to convince the Congress it's too early to start all that. So you've got to help me set a good example. [Laughter]

I am delighted to be here and delighted to be with you. I'm delighted to be here once again to express my support for your work every day, and my thanks for the support you

have given to me in our common efforts to rebuild this economy and to increase homeownership.

Spring is the traditional start of the home-buying season, and it's a time of hope and, at least for us here in Washington, it came not a day too soon. We suffered through a tough winter, and we thought the spring would never come. But I was glad to see that in March, that home resale activity was up in every region of the country, and there was a 16-percent jump in single-family home sales last month, compared to March of '95. I hope that is a harbinger of a good spring, a good summer, and a good year for you and for the United States.

Art said something—I didn't even have a note on this, I wasn't going to talk about it because I hear everybody is not interested in foreign policy, but I want to tell you something. You made a remark about our common understanding of the importance of homeownership in building our democracy. As I'm sure most of you know, I just came back from a trip to Korea, Japan, and Russia, and I had an astonishing experience in Russia, in addition to being there at a nuclear summit where we made some real strides forward in our unfinished work of removing any danger of nuclear explosions from the face of our children's future. I had an opportunity to meet with 12 leaders from very different political factions in Russia, as they are getting ready to have another election there for President. And it was fascinating. First of all, they had a virtual brawl of an argument right there in front of me, which I liked. *[Laughter]* They behaved just like our politicians do. *[Laughter]* Made me think they were kind of healthy. *[Laughter]*

But it was very interesting to see that one of the things that is happening to change that country, to make more people more devoted to democracy and freedom, is the ownership of property. And it is very interesting to see that in the areas where there is more ownership of property, where people, for example, own more of their own businesses, they're more committed to democracy and to economic reform and to the promise of free enterprise, even with all of its troubles as they start.

And so now they're trying to get more homeowners, more property ownership, out in the rural areas of the country. And I say that just to say a lot of times we just take it for granted that once you start a democracy it's just such a wonderful thing we just keep on with it. And we realize that—I mean, we forget that this is the oldest continuous democracy in human history, and it's not all that easy to start one and it's not all that easy to save one. And a lot of times people want to lay down the burden of governing themselves and making all these hard decisions and living under the rule of law and enduring defeat as well as victory in elections and in other big decisions.

And I was there still watching this very great country with its rich and profound history essentially still in the process of defining what it wishes to be in the 21st century. And it struck me so clearly there that giving people a piece of the country for themselves, whether it was in the private ownership of a building, private ownership of a farm, private ownership of a home, private ownership of a business, that is the key to making everybody feel that they can really win, even if their side doesn't win every election or if every issue doesn't go their way.

So that liberty, free speech, and free elections and personal liberties should include—indeed, I would argue must include—the recognition of private ownership of property in order to make sure that democracies can last. I wish them well, and I know that you do, but I thought you'd be interested in that.

We take this country and everything good about it for granted, and we take our system for granted. And sometimes we don't even show up on election day and we say—nearly every citizen does say—from time to time says foolish things like, well, it doesn't really matter what happens, and all that. We just think it will go on. But one reason it probably will go on is that we all have a piece of America. And even people who don't own property still have a piece of America because they know they can, they know that we all can participate in this.

And so when you see the next couple of months unfold in Russia and you watch that, and you see what happens to their democracy, you ought to just think about what they

have in common with us. And as they move to have more control in their—individuals and families and communities—over their future, a lot of it will be because they have a personal, private stake in the public future of a free country.

Four years ago when I sought this job I am now privileged to hold, things weren't so good for you or for the rest of the country. Our economy was down, unemployment was high, the deficit was exploding, the debt had quadrupled in just 12 years. I wanted to change the course of this country, and I knew we had to do it, first of all, by getting economic growth back by driving interest rates down. And that meant that we had to do something about the deficit. But to me it was part of a vision that I have about what I want our country to look like in the 21st century and how I want America to be perceived by all of its citizens.

I want this country to be a place where everybody who is willing to work hard and obey the law has a chance to live out their dreams without regard to their race or their region or their station they were born to in life. I want this country to be a place that is coming together, not being driven apart, even though we're rapidly becoming the most diverse democracy in the world. Los Angeles County alone has 150 different racial and ethnic and religious groups within one county. But if we can come together and meet our challenges, based on shared values, instead of being driven apart, that's a guarantee of America's strength.

And I want us to continue to lead the world as the greatest force for freedom and peace and security and prosperity, because whether we like it or not, we're living in a global economy and we can't run away from it. So we'd better try to shape it; we'd better try to have more democracies and more people who want to work with us and more people who are committed to finding nonviolent solutions to their own problems, as well as to the problems that affect us all.

We've seen it lately in the great debate we've had the world over on terrorism. And we know now that in this great open world we're living in, with all of its opportunities, the organized forces of evil can cross national boundaries. You can have a terrorist that's

homegrown, or you can have a terrorist that is tied to the forces beyond your borders, as we did at the World Trade Center. And every country is facing these kinds of challenges.

So I want all those things for our country. But I know it all begins by giving individuals and families the power to make the most of their own lives. And we could never have done that unless we started by reversing the disastrous fiscal condition of this country by bringing that deficit down and getting interest rates down and promoting economic growth, while continuing to invest in the things that we all know we have to invest in, like education and infrastructure and environmental protection and the integrity of our medical programs, so that the country can grow together.

Now, that's what I tried to put together in that 1993 economic plan. And this organization supported that, and I will be eternally grateful. But it worked. I predicted that if we implemented it we would cut the deficit in half and generate 8 million new jobs. Well, last month the Congressional Budget Office said that by the end of this year the deficit will be less than half of what it was 4 years ago, and we already have 8½ million new jobs. That's something you can be proud of.

This country is enjoying the lowest combined rates of unemployment and inflation in what used to be called the "misery index" in 27 years. For 3 years in a row we've had a record number of new businesses started and—I like this statistic—a record number of new self-made millionaires, not people who were inheriting their wealth, but people who made it the old-fashioned way in America. Our telecommunications and auto industries are once again leading the world. We've halted finally—and this may, over the long run, be the most important thing of all—we have finally halted a 10-year-long slide in average hourly earnings. And most important to you, of course, as has already been said, homeownership is at a 15-year high.

The Government has been reduced in size and it has been reformed so that it is beginning to work better and cost less. I'll just give you one example. The Small Business Administration has cut its budget by over 25 percent and doubled its loan volume. And

I'm very proud of that. It's the smallest your Federal Government—as you come here to Washington this month, it's the smallest it has been since 1965. [Applause] Thank you.

By the end of this year it will be the smallest it has been since 1963. And yet, we are still working to try to do better. There's been a quiet revolution in the relationship of the National Government not only to the private sector, but to State and local governments. There's been a lot of debate in Washington, for example, about what kind of welfare reform legislation we ought to sign. But I think there's a broad consensus in America that the welfare system ought to empower people to take responsibility for their own lives, not just support people forever who ought to be supporting themselves.

We had some differences here about how that ought to be done. I have a very strong conviction that most people—based on my 12 years as a Governor, I have a very strong conviction that most people on welfare are dying to get off of it if they can be given the ways to work and support themselves and they don't have to hurt their kids. So I'm for a system that is very, very tough on work, very tough on child support enforcement, but is good to the kids, has child care and other support for the children. It ought to be pro-work and pro-family. After all, most of you had to work and raise your families. Most Americans are working and raising children. So what we want is an America where everybody can succeed at home and at work. And if we have to choose one or the other, we get in a lot of hot water because none of us have any more important job than raising our own children well. So that's what we're striving for.

But anyway, you might be interested to know while all this hullabaloo about the legislation has been going on, we have made over 50 agreements with 37 States to get them out from under destructive Federal rules and regulations, and let them require people who can work to work. Seventy-three percent of the people on welfare in this country are under welfare reform today, and that's a good thing.

But I want to talk to you today about the paradoxes of this good news, because you have all seen the paradoxes. You know, for

example—I mean, if I had told you this 3 years ago, let me ask you if you would have found it hard to believe—if I had said to you, look, you support my economic plan and in 3 years and 4 months we'll have 8½ million new jobs, we'll cut the deficit by more than half, we'll have the lowest combined rates of unemployment and inflation in 27 years, highest homeownership in 15 years, but wages for the bottom half of the work force would be more or less stagnant, about what they were 15 years ago, and there will be places in our inner cities and rural areas that won't have any new investment, and there will be a lot of people that look like me, 50-year-old white guys, that will be being downsized at big companies just when they're trying to send their kids to college, and they won't know what to do and how to get another job paying anything like what they were making, and there will be a lot of women and people of color going through the same thing, but there are a lot of these big companies—and they'll be out of work for a while—and we'll cut the inflation rate in health care dramatically by having more competition, but we'll still have a lot of people who won't be able to get health insurance because they work for small businesses and it's too expensive, or because they can't take it from job to job with them—you'd say, well, that doesn't make sense, it doesn't compute.

The reason it's happening is that we're going through the period of most profound economic change we've been in 100 years, since we've moved from farm to factory and from the country to the city, as a general rule. Now, we're moving from a cold war set of regional economies in the world to a global economy, and every kind of work is more dominated by information and technology, including yours, than it was 5 or 10 years ago. If you were to go home with me in Arkansas at planting time or harvest time you'd see people driving around in farm equipment with computers, maybe with software in it that they designed themselves.

So with all these changes, what has happened? A lot of work that used to be done by a lot of people can now be done by a few people. And all organizations need fewer people passing orders down and information back up. And there's an enormous mobility

in technology and money and information and management. And that's what's creating all these incredible opportunities for people that I just reeled off.

But if you happen to be on the wrong side of it on a given day, it can also dislocate your life. And it happened 100 years ago. When we became an industrial country there were people who came in from the country and went to cities and got jobs in factories and overnight became middle-class citizens—for the first time in their lives could afford to have their own home and send their kids to good schools and have a decent retirement, maybe even take a vacation for the first time.

But there were also tens of thousands of people living in tenement houses in these cities, virtually without the means to support themselves, because when you have this kind of upheaval you have some bad along with the good. And what we have to do is to find a way to grow this economy fast enough to keep America generating these new jobs, but also give people the chance to raise their families in dignity, to get incomes up, to be able to afford to buy their own home, to be able to have access to education for a lifetime if they have to change jobs and access to health care they can carry around with them from job to job and access to retirement savings that they can carry around with them from job to job, so that we can compose family life and community life and still keep the American job machine growing.

That is the challenge of the moment, and you will play a big role in that. I think you understand that. That is what I hope so much that in this election year we can have an honest debate about. We don't need another stale debate about yesterday's issues, or this one's an alien and the other one ought to be disqualified and all that kind of stuff. We ought to actually have an honest discussion about which path to the future we're going to take, because no great country has solved this problem. Indeed, no other country has done anything nearly as well as the United States has in generating new jobs. But we have to say, even with all these jobs we need to have a really permanently growing economy that is pro-family and pro-community and that gives everybody a chance to live up

to their dreams. That is the challenge we all face as Americans today.

Now, I believe that homeownership is a big part of that. You know that and I do, too. So we ought to balance the budget, but I don't think that we should do it in a way that undermines the ability of people to own their own home. If we can simplify the tax code, I'm all for it. But I don't think we ought to adopt a flat tax that will raise taxes on everybody making less than \$100,000 a year and put homeownership out of the reach of all the people in those categories.

Your president has already mentioned that the last time I spoke to you in Anaheim in 1994, I asked you to work with Secretary Cisneros to develop a national homeownership strategy that will take us up to two-thirds of the American people in their own homes, 8 million new homeowners by the end of the century. And we are well on our way to getting there because of the 56 major housing and finance groups that have joined us. I want to thank you for that.

I also want to thank you for your support of FHA, and I want to ask you to continue to support it. Again, there's always an argument for doing anything that will save money to help us to balance the budget. But we don't want to do anything that will undermine our ability to grow the economy. And if you want hard working people on modest incomes to have a chance to be pro-work and pro-family, lower income people have got to have access to buy modestly priced homes. That's why we shouldn't do anything to wreck FHA. And I hope you'll stay with us on this.

Last June, Secretary Cisneros and I were joined by representatives of this partnership, including people from your organization, at the White House. We announced 100 specific actions that we can take to make homeownership more affordable, to target underserved populations, to educate those who haven't considered becoming homeowners. Now, we've now got this national homeownership rate, at the end of the first quarter of 1996, up to 65.1 percent. That's the highest rate since 1981 and the sharpest increase, as you heard earlier, in 30 years. We can make it. We can get up to two-thirds of the American people in their own homes by the end of this decade.

Beginning next week, HUD and FHA will launch the next phase of this effort, a grass-roots outreach and education campaign designed to help millions of new Americans become homeowners. The cornerstone is a new toll-free number to provide instant information on the wide variety of home-buying help that HUD offers. We're going to launch a series of home-buying seminars in schools in over 20 markets across the country, to bring together real estate professionals, lenders, governmental and nonprofit organizations to help potential first-time buyers gain an understanding of the process. Outreach and PSAs will show how FHA can open the door to homeownership.

I don't need to tell you about how important that is. And again, I want to thank you for helping. But let me say that the most important thing we can do to help you is to continue to grow this economy. And the most important thing that we can do to continue to grow the economy is to keep the interest rates down by finishing the unfinished business of balancing the Federal budget in a way that is consistent with our values and our long-term economic interests.

Now, yesterday I signed a bipartisan budget that will cover the Government's operations for the rest of this year. We fought about it for 6 months. But I would have gladly signed the budget I signed yesterday on the first day of the new budget year. It was a year of intense and heated debate, but finally, the Republicans and the Democrats in the Congress and the White House came together and we crafted an agreement that is good for the American people.

First, the budget I signed for this year keeps the deficit on a downward path. We're now cutting the deficit for the 4th year in a row for the first time since Harry Truman was the President of the United States. The budget cuts billions of dollars in spending and eliminates outright over 200 Government programs. I bet you don't miss a one of them. *[Laughter]* You know, while I was a Governor, every 2 years I'd eliminate a government agency just to see if anybody complained. *[Laughter]* And I never got the first letter. *[Laughter]*

But let me say that the budget we adopted also upholds our values and keeps my pledge

that this budget honors our commitments to our elderly, to our children, and to our future. It invests enough to keep environmental protection going in a responsible way. It invests enough to keep our commitments in education and to keep opening the doors of college education wider, to keep striving for higher standards in education, to keep more kids coming into these Head Start programs. It does the right thing there. It protects the integrity of the Medicare and Medicaid programs while understanding that we have to do things to lower the inflation rate in them. That's what it did for this year.

Now, this is just a one-year budget. When you hear us talk about the balanced budget up here, that's a multiyear budget plan. And now it's time to finish that job. Earlier this year I proposed a plan to balance the budget, and Congress' own economists have now certified that it will do so in 7 years. The Republicans in Congress have their own balanced budget plan that is now different from the one that I vetoed several months ago. If you laid my plan and their plan side by side, you would find enough cuts in common to both plans to balance the budget and still provide a modest tax cut, stuff we have agreed on already in common spending reductions. The ingredients, therefore, for a balanced budget are clearly at hand.

Are there other things we disagree on? You bet there are. We disagree about the details of how Medicare should be changed. We disagree about certain specific things in the area of environmental policy. We have big disagreements about whether we should abandon our commitment to put 100,000 police on the street—I don't think we should—or whether we should cut back on a college loan program that's making the loans more affordable to our kids. I don't think we should do that.

But if you're just talking about balancing the budget, there is more than enough savings in common to both these plans to do that and provide a modest tax cut right now. All we need to do is to sit down and make the agreement. And I made it clear that I want to meet with the leaders of Congress as soon as possible. I'm willing to meet with a big group of lawmakers or a little group of lawmakers, with the leaders or the fol-

lowers or the caucuses or the bipartisan groups or any group of them. When Senator Dole suggested last week, perhaps in jest, that he thought the two Presidential candidates ought to sit down and work it out, I accepted within 10 minutes of hearing the offer. I'll do it any way. We can cut it flat around. There's not that much difference, anyway. But the fact is that we ought to do it. We should not have a work stoppage here in April because there's an election in November. We ought to stay at the job and get the job done.

Again I say, while you're here I hope you will urge us—you don't have to take sides in all the details. You don't have to say, the President is right. But I hope your voice will be loud and clear that the time is now, not next year, now, to pass a genuine, compassionate, but tough bipartisan balanced budget plan to keep these interest rates coming down and this economy growing. You will benefit from it, but so will all the rest of America.

Let me say this: In spite of all the fights that we have up here, this budget agreement that I signed was not the only good thing that's happened in the last year and 4 months coming out of the Congress. But they all have something in common. Just a few days ago I signed an antiterrorism bill that will dramatically increase the capacity of your Government to fight terrorism.

A few weeks ago I signed a telecommunications bill which will create hundreds of thousands of new high-wage jobs in the telecommunications industry and keep America leading in many sectors of that important part of our economy. Just a few days ago, the United States Senate passed 100 to zero the Kassebaum-Kennedy health care reform bill which simply says you ought to be able to keep your health insurance if you move from job to job and you ought to be able to buy it, even if someone in your family has been sick. That's what it says.

Now, all those things, those good things that have happened that I laud the congressional leadership of the other party for supporting have just one thing in common. Every one of them has one thing in common. They were passed with bipartisan support and they were negotiated in good faith be-

tween the President and the Congress. In other words, we put the public interest over short-term political advantage. And because the right thing was done, everybody was better off. Now, that is what we ought to do on this budget.

I remember once in the heat of the cold war, President Kennedy said in his Inaugural Address, let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate. That is my message to the Congress. Let's get to work and do this job for the American people.

Beyond the budget, I want you to know—a lot of you clapped when I talked about the Kassebaum-Kennedy health care bill. The Senate version passed 100 to nothing. Why? Because it's a clean, simple bill designed to achieve those two objectives. The House version of the bill was far more controversial. Why? Because there were certain specific interests that wanted other things in the bill. They honestly believe it would be good for America; a lot of the rest of us don't think it would be good. We think it would do more harm than good.

My question to you is, since you all clapped for the two things and they passed 100 to nothing, I urge you again, say to the Congress, pass that bill clean. Don't clutter it up with things we disagree about. These are big things. This will help millions and millions of people. Pass a clean, good bill that has bipartisan support that will help everybody in America. It will be good for America. There's no politics in it if we all do it together. That's the right thing for the country in health care and in the budget. And I ask for your support for that as well.

Let me say in closing that I ask you again to ask yourselves what do you want America to look like in the 21st century? What are you working for? What do you want your children and grandchildren to feel like when they get up every morning? What kind of world do you want them to live in?

If you want them to be able to live out their dreams if they're willing to work hard for it; if you want them to live in a country that's still the strongest force in the world for peace and freedom and security; if you want them to live in a country where we meet our challenges together, no matter how di-

verse we are because we share the same values, then we have to keep in mind two things. First of all, we have to give every American the capacity to make good choices and be rewarded for work; everybody's got to have the ability to do it. There's a lot of talk about empowerment in Washington. It's a buzzword today. I love that word. But it means more than choice. It means the ability to seize the choice you want to make. And the second thing we've got to do is to do it together.

We are moving into a new age. The old categories in which we divided ourselves do not give us easy answers to these new challenges. As I said before, there's not a country in the world that solved the problem of economic growth that gives everybody a chance to participate in it, that deals with the downsizing, the areas that don't get investment, the stagnation of wages among people that don't have a lot of education. We're trying to come to grips with that.

But we cannot do it in the old, highly intensely partisan way. That is doomed to failure. Because we are moving into a new era, we have to break new ground. We have to be willing to give up on some of the things that we used to hold on to and grab on to each other and work together and solve these problems. And we have to be animated by the vision we have of what we want America to look like. Homeownership has to be a part of it. A growing economy has to be a part of it. A more unified sense of our ability to work together through our diversity has to be a part of it. But it begins by saying we have to put the public interest ahead of short-term politics. I ask for your support as Americans for that goal.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:45 p.m. in the ballroom at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Art Godi, president, Michael Graeper, chair, and Robert Galiano, vice chair, Public Policy Forum, and Russ Booth, 1996 president-elect, National Association of Realtors.

Remarks at the 25th Anniversary Reception for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

April 27, 1996

That's the most attractive introduction I've ever had. *[Laughter]*

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome, welcome to the White House and welcome here for this occasion. We're delighted to join in the 25th anniversary celebration, and I want to say a special word of welcome to the members of the Kennedy family and to thank them for remaining tireless in their efforts to preserve, promote, and honor our Nation's culture.

The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts prospers today as our national cultural institution, thanks to so many people who are committed to that ideal, the ideal that art and culture are not so much a pastime as a definer, a clarifier, a representation of America.

Recently, the First Lady and I returned from a trip to the Far East and to Russia, and, as in other visits, we saw how prized an export our culture is. It's not just coincidence that it is embraced and adapted by a world increasingly sharing our democratic ideals. Visit almost any part of the world and there can be no doubt, our art, our music, our dance and theater are among our greatest ambassadors.

Here in America the Kennedy Center is the Nation's stage. It's hard to believe that just a quarter century ago it was only a goal. President and Mrs. Kennedy realized the significance of a national cultural center. They even held a telethon to raise funds for the center. Of course, President Kennedy could not have known that he would be the center's greatest inspiration and its namesake. But there could not be a more fitting living memorial, for at the Kennedy Center each night we enjoy great performances, each year we honor great performing artists. Every day we work to commission and create new works and to reach and educate a new generation.

The Kennedy Center makes our culture accessible as it never was before. Last year more than 2 million people attended performances at the center. Another 20 million saw its touring and broadcast productions. And many of these people who could not otherwise afford the price of admission took advantage of free and low-cost performances.

The Kennedy Center is truly a place for all Americans. It is promise and proof of our shared values. It offers a forum to an amazing variety of God-given talents. The best of art endures, enriches, and enlivens the human condition far beyond the horizon of any of our tomorrows. Our art is the best record of who we are, what we have been, and what we hope to become.

President Kennedy said it best in words inscribed in the marble walls of his memorial: "There is a connection, hard to explain logically, but easy to feel between achievement in public life and progress in the arts. The age of Pericles was also the age of Phidias. The age of Lorenzo de Medici was also the age of Leonardo da Vinci. The age of Elizabeth was also the age of Shakespeare."

Tonight we pause and pay tribute to the deeper sources of our strength, the expressions of the human spirit that light up not only our stages, but our national life. We celebrate 25 years of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and we look forward in joyful expectation to new generations of performances. The best of the Kennedy Center is yet to come.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Statement on Exports of Alaska North Slope Crude Oil *April 28, 1996*

Today I am taking action that will allow, for the first time, exports of Alaska North Slope (ANS) crude oil. Permitting this oil to move freely in international commerce will contribute to economic growth, reduce dependence on imported oil, and create new jobs for American workers. It will not adversely affect oil supplies or gasoline prices on the West Coast, in Hawaii, or in the rest of the Nation.

I am also announcing additional measures to address safety concerns relating to oil tankers and other commercial vessels in Puget Sound-area waters in Washington State.

I want to express my appreciation to Congress, led by the Alaska congressional delegation, for its bipartisan support of the legislation that has made exports possible. In addition, I want to express my appreciation to Alaska Governor Tony Knowles. It has been a pleasure to work with him to make ANS exports a reality.

After careful consideration, I have determined that ending the 23-year ban against exporting ANS oil is in the national interest, subject to four important conditions:

1. Tankers exporting ANS crude oil must remain outside of the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone. This will ensure that tankers in the ANS export trade remain far from the U.S. coastline and the environmentally sensitive areas along the Aleutian Islands.
2. ANS export tankers must be equipped with a satellite communications system to permit the Coast Guard to monitor the tankers' positions.
3. ANS export tankers must be inspected annually, in accordance with U.S. Coast Guard policies and procedures. This condition will ensure that the tankers are kept in safe working order.
4. ANS export tankers will be required to exchange their ballast water in deep ocean water prior to entering Alaska's Prince William Sound. Ship logs will record ballast exchanges and will be checked periodically by the Coast Guard. This condition will help prevent the introduction into Alaskan fisheries of nonindigenous, aquatic nuisance species.

These requirements, which will be applied to ANS oil exports as export license conditions, will protect Alaska's unique environment and abundant natural resources. A fifth requirement—that exports be carried in U.S.-flag tankers, crewed by U.S. merchant seamen—is already in place under PL 104-58, the oil export legislation I supported and signed into law last November. That law is

also the source of the authority under which I am imposing the four additional export conditions.

By removing the ban that has prevented ANS oil from moving freely in international markets for more than two decades, we will be stimulating increased domestic oil production in Alaska and California, creating new jobs in the oil industry, and preserving jobs for America's merchant seamen.

Over the last several months, my administration has conducted an extensive interagency review of the environmental, economic, and energy aspects of lifting the ban. Led by the National Economic Council and the Council on Environmental Quality, the interagency review team confirmed the Department of Energy's 1994 findings that lifting the export ban would provide important benefits to the economy. Permitting exports will generate up to 25,000 more jobs, particularly for American workers in California and Alaska, but also in States that produce oil industry supplies and equipment. Additional oil production of about 100,000 barrels per day is expected, according to DOE projections, and Alaska, California, and the Federal Government will also benefit from up to \$2 billion in additional Federal, State, and local royalty and tax payments.

The review group identified an additional benefit of exports. It determined that overall tanker movements along the West Coast will decline. Because of the ban, the ANS oil that exceeds the West Coast's needs currently must be shipped down the West Coast anyway. Without the ban, that "surplus" oil—which has been suppressing Alaska and California producer prices below U.S. market levels—can now be exported.

While the review group found no likelihood of adverse impacts from ANS exports on Washington State's consumers, refiners, or environment, concern is clearly rising in that State about the increasing volume of vessel traffic projected to occur as a result of *other* factors. For example, the growing international trade between Washington State and Pacific Rim nations, while clearly a boon to the State's economy, is prompting debate over the adequacy of current vessel safety procedures and resources.

I share those concerns. Accordingly, I am requesting the Coast Guard to prepare, by no later than 120 days from today, a status report on its plan for a private-sector vessel assistance system. I am also asking the Coast Guard to accelerate completion of the plan, which will be submitted to Congress, and to offer its assistance to any serious private-sector efforts to improve vessel safety. The plan is required under a provision of the ANS export law authored by Senator Patty Murray, who has been at the forefront of efforts to safeguard her State's waterways. To further support those efforts, I am asking the Secretary of Transportation to determine, by the end of this year, the need for additional, cost-effective measures to protect the marine environment, and to prevent shipping accidents, in Washington State.

Finally, I wish to emphasize that in permitting ANS oil to be exported, I am in no way diminishing my authority under various laws to impose new export restrictions if necessary to respond to a national emergency, or to deal with severe oil supply shortages.

Memorandum on Exports of Alaskan North Slope Crude Oil

April 28, 1996

Memorandum for the Secretary of Commerce, The Secretary of Energy

Subject: Exports of Alaskan North Slope (ANS) Crude Oil

Pursuant to section 28(s) of the Mineral Leasing Act, as amended, 30 U.S.C. 185, I hereby determine that exports of crude oil transported over right-of-way granted pursuant to section 203 of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act are in the national interest. In making this determination, I have taken into account the conclusions of an interagency working group, which found that such oil exports:

- will not diminish the total quantity or quality of petroleum available to the United States; and
- are not likely to cause sustained material oil supply shortages or sustained oil price increases significantly above world market levels that would cause sustained material adverse employment effects in

the United States or that would cause substantial harm to consumers, including those located in noncontiguous States and Pacific Territories.

I have also considered the interagency group's conclusions regarding potential environmental impacts of lifting the ban. Based on their findings and recommendations, I have concluded that exports of such crude oil will not pose significant risks to the environment if certain terms and conditions are met.

Therefore, pursuant to section 28(s) of the Mineral Leasing Act I direct the Secretary of Commerce to promulgate immediately a general license, or a license exception, authorizing exports of such crude oil, subject to appropriate documentation requirements, and consistent with the following conditions:

- tankers exporting ANS exports must use the same route that they do for shipments to Hawaii until they reach a point 300 miles due south of Cape Hinchinbrook Light and then turn toward Asian destinations. After reaching that point, tankers in the ANS oil trade must remain outside of the 200 nautical-miles Exclusive Economic Zone of the United States as defined in the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1811). This condition also applies to tankers returning from foreign ports to Valdez, Alaska. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the vessel master only to ensure the safety of the vessel;
- that export tankers be equipped with satellite-based communications systems that will enable the Coast Guard independently to determine their location. The Coast Guard will conduct appropriate monitoring of the tankers, a measure that will ensure compliance with the 200-mile condition, and help the Coast Guard respond quickly to any emergencies;
- the owner or operator of an Alaskan North Slope crude oil export tankship shall maintain a Critical Area Inspection Plan for each tankship in the trade in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard's Navigation and Inspection Circular No. 15-91 as amended, which shall include

an annual internal survey of the vessel's cargo block tanks; and

- the owner or operator of an Alaskan North Slope crude oil export tankship shall adopt a mandatory program of deep water ballast exchange (i.e., in 2,000 meters water depth). Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the captain only in order to ensure the safety of the vessel. Recordkeeping subject to Coast Guard audit will be required as part of this regime.

The Secretary of Commerce is authorized and directed to inform the appropriate committees of the Congress of this determination and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 1, 1996]

NOTE: This memorandum was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 28 but was not issued as a White House press release. It was published in the *Federal Register* on May 2.

Remarks to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee Policy Conference

April 28, 1996

Thank you very much. Mr. Prime Minister, I just thought I was tired because it was late Sunday night. I never felt better in my life. Thank you very much.

Mr. Prime Minister, Ambassador Rabinovich, Secretary Glickman, Ambassador Indyk. President Dow, thank you for that wonderful introduction. Mr. Grossman, Mr. Sher, Mr. Bronfman, Mr. Levy, to Jack Bendheim, who also gave a wonderful introduction; the cochairs of this event, Art Sandler and Betsy Sheer; to all the young students who are here.

The Prime Minister referred on two occasions to the opportunity that I had on my last trip to Israel to meet with the young people there. It was an incredible experience for me. And I realized that in some ways we have to keep depending on young people to deliver us because they remind us that we can

break new ground and make tomorrow different from yesterday.

Just before the Prime Minister and I came in here tonight, we received petitions for peace signed largely by college students that were presented by Jonathan Epstein of Trinity College and Abigail Michelson of Brandeis, and I'd like to thank them. I think they're over here. I thank them very much for what they did for that.

I would also like to say a special word of thanks to the Members of Congress who are here who have supported our administration's policies in the Middle East. If I miss someone whom I do not see, write me a nasty note tomorrow. [Laughter] But I would like to say a special word of thanks to Senator Lautenberg, Congressman Frost, Congressman Engel, Congresswoman Lowey, Congressman Waxman, and Congressman Levin. And I hope I didn't miss anybody; we can't afford to lose any more friends in Congress. [Laughter]

When the Prime Minister said that Israel was now spending as much money on education as defense, I thought of seeing if I could get him to stay another week and just testify before a few committees. [Laughter] And when you, sir, said that I had made history for a second time, I can see myself being guilt-peddled into the future; I can make history now every year from now on until the end of my life. [Laughter]

Since I associate you with the struggle for peace, I can't help, if you will indulge me one real purely personal observation: The last time I appeared before this conference before last year was in 1989, when the person who was supposed to appear on behalf of the Democratic Party against Lee Atwater went to his daughter's college graduation. I thought he had his priorities in order, and so when he asked me to replace him, I was glad to stand in for Ron Brown. And since he lost his life on another remarkable mission of peace, I thought I would share that with you tonight, and I hope you will remember that and remember him and his family in your prayers.

I am pleased as the Prime Minister is that we can come here tonight with the northern border of Israel and the southern border of Lebanon quiet—no Katyusha rockets firing

down on the people of northern Israel. I thank the Prime Minister for the tremendous work he did. And in his absence—and I hope to goodness he's sleeping right now—I want to thank the Secretary of State for his magnificent herculean effort. I also thank his partner and great unsung hero, Dennis Ross, for what he has done.

As the Prime Minister said, we had an agreement back in 1993, but it wasn't in writing, and it was shattered. For the first time now, there is an agreement in writing that will be more effective in preventing further outbreaks. The violence has stopped. There is now a monitoring mechanism to which Israel and Lebanon can refer complaints. And now it is our fond hope that civilians on both sides of the border can resume their lives with greater confidence and security. And we will not tolerate further efforts to disrupt the calm.

When I came into office, I was determined that our country would go into the 21st century still the world's greatest force for peace and freedom, for democracy and security and prosperity. We have to promote these values just as vigorously as we did in the cold war. Indeed, in some ways, our responsibilities as Americans are now greater.

I know that you agree with that. You have devoted yourselves to strengthening the bonds between the United States and Israel, a cornerstone of our foreign policy and of our efforts to advance peace and freedom and democracy in the Middle East. I thank you for that and I ask you, too, to continue to speak out in a larger sense for America's role in the world. It has made a difference what we have done in the Middle East and in Bosnia and in Northern Ireland and in Haiti and in fighting against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and in leading the world to take a tougher stand against terrorism. We cannot afford to walk away from these responsibilities to the future of our children, our children's children, and the children of all the world.

What a difference a year can make. It was at this conference last year that Israel's then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said, from day one Israel found itself in a unique alliance with the United States, resting on twin pillars of shared values and strategic partnership.

Well, it's still true. And now the United States and Israel are still partners based on shared values and common strategies.

I am grateful for the service, the life, and the sacrifice of Prime Minister Rabin. But I am also very grateful that the man he called his full partner, our friend Shimon Peres, is carrying forward the important work of peace with security. From his earliest days when he helped to establish Israel's military, up to the very present when he has defined a vision of a new Middle East in his remarkable book—which, Prime Minister, I have told the whole world I enjoyed reading, and I'm promoting it for you and I hope I get a certain percentage kickback if it really does very well. *[Laughter]* We just made another agreement. They're just spouting out all over.

I said that in jest—*[laughter]*—to lay the pretext for a serious comment. At least the critical mass of American Jews should read that book and become familiar with its contents, because if you do it will give you the energy for the tasks ahead, because the Prime Minister has been able to imagine what the future might be like beyond the history that can be made with the other peace signings. And that vision is what must drive us all into tomorrow.

We have made a lot of progress with the Declaration of Principles of the Palestinians, the peace of the Araba with Jordan, the interim accord that was signed in Washington. I have watched in these very difficult months since Prime Minister Rabin's assassination Prime Minister Peres rise to this moment. He has been a true and reliable friend of our country, and a true and reliable leader of his own. And I am proud to say, as Yitzhak Rabin said, he is our full partner for peace and security.

This has been a trying time for those who believe that a secure peace is the only true hope for Israel and the Middle East. The Katyusha rockets, the bloodshed in Lebanon, the suicide bombings in Israel—we grieve for the innocent victims, for the Israelis who simply wanted to live quiet lives in their own country, for the innocent Palestinians who were killed in the suicide bombings in Israel, for the children of our own Nation, Sarah Duker and Matthew Eisenfeld, visiting a land they loved; for the Lebanese children in

Qana who were caught between—make no mistake about it—the deliberate tactics of Hezbollah in their positioning and firing and the tragic misfiring in Israel's legitimate exercise of its right to self-defense.

I know that in Israel and Lebanon, throughout the Middle East and throughout the world, it would be so easy after yet another round of violence and death to give up, to think that the very best we could expect is a future of separate armed camps. It is that sort of bunker mentality that we fight, indeed, all across the world in different ways today. It would be easy to give into it in the Middle East, but it would be wrong.

I was asked the other day whether the violence of the last few days was not proof that the peace process was dead. I said, no, quite the contrary; it was proof that the yearning for peace was alive. The people who started the violence were trying to kill the longing for peace. It is still alive, and we must not let it die. We must stand up to what they tried to do.

We can still achieve a peace if we conquer fear and restore security and deal honestly with those with whom we have differences. We know it will not be easy. Peace requires in some ways more strength than war. And we must have the patience to endure a few more setbacks along the way. We know that it takes great courage to press forward into an unknown future. It's harder than retreating into a familiar past. It takes great bravery to reach out to a former enemy. It's easier to stay in the false security of isolation.

But I believe that Israel will maintain its resolve for peace. As I said, I saw it in the eyes and I heard it in the voices of the children of Israel when I was there just last month. I saw it in the eyes of those two young Americans who gave Prime Minister Peres and me those petitions. I heard it from two boys in Israel, Uri Tal and Tal Loel, who were badly wounded in the bombing in Tel Aviv—one even deafened. Despite their pain, they wrote to me from their hospital beds, and I quote, from their hospital beds they wrote: "Peace is the only true solution for this area." They showed strength, having lost much even in their young years. They showed the ability to overcome adversity that

is the true genius of the character and history of the Jewish people.

If the Jewish people have endured centuries of exile, persecution, the ultimate evil of the Holocaust, flourishing against all the odds, surely—surely—together they can throw back their shoulders and raise their heads and say, after all this, Hezbollah and Hamas will not succeed where others have failed.

Even as the Katyushas were falling, we saw proof of peace taking hold. We saw it in the meeting between Prime Minister Peres and Chairman Arafat 10 days ago, when they vowed to move ahead on the goals set by the accords. We saw it in the Prime Minister's path-breaking trips to Qatar and Oman this month. And I salute again the Prime Minister for the strength and commitment he has shown in pursuing the peace in this difficult period.

And of course, last Wednesday, on the 48th anniversary of Israeli independence, the Palestinian National Council finally did change the PLO charter and deleted the hateful clause calling for the destruction of Israel. Now, think about that. That symbol of hatred had endured since 1964, before some people in this room were even born. It's a moment we have long waited and worked for. The Palestinian leadership followed through on its commitments and made a better move to a better day. All friends of peace should be heartened by this, and especially by the large margin of the vote in support of Chairman Arafat's policy.

Even during the suicide bombings there was dramatic proof that peace is taking root. Remember, as Prime Minister Peres said, at the Summit of the Peacemakers in Sharm al-Sheikh we had 29 leaders from around the globe and 13 from the Arab world voting and committing themselves for the first time not only to condemn but to work against terrorism in Israel. It was an historic moment. And we are following up on it.

I say again, I want to hammer this home, not only to you who know, but to people beyond this room; this progress for peace is the reason the enemies of peace are lashing out. We must restore peace. We must restore security. But we must not be diverted from our

ultimate goal, else we will hand them the victory that they have sought all along.

We know the circle of peace cannot be closed only by an end to the fighting in Lebanon. It can be closed only when the Arab-Israeli conflict is truly over; when normalization takes hold in the entire Arab world; when Israel's security is completely assured; when Israel is fully accepted in every way in the region. The circle of peace will be closed only—and I say only—when the people of Israel are confident that what they are getting is worth the risks they must take. Peace and security are indivisible. And Israel must feel comfortable and confident about both in order to achieve either over the long run.

Let me say to you what I hope you already know, the breakthroughs of the past were possible because we built together a bond of trust. And I pledge to you today that this relationship will remain strong and vital, so strong and so vital that no one will ever drive a wedge between us.

Our commitment to Israel's security is unshakable. It will stay that way because Israel must have the means to defend itself by itself. In a time of shrinking resources, we have maintained our economic assistance. We have sought to enhance Israel's security to lessen the risks it has taken and still takes every day for peace.

Israel's qualitative military edge is greater than ever because we have kept our word. Earlier today, Prime Minister Peres and Secretary Perry signed an agreement to expand our theater missile defense program so that we can detect and destroy incoming missiles. That way Israel will have not only the advantage it needs today, but will be able to defeat the threats of tomorrow.

As part of this effort, we are proceeding with the third phase of the deployment of the Arrow missile program. The United States is committing \$200 million to this effort so that the children who lived through the Scud attacks of the Gulf War will never again face that fear. We also pledge to expand work on the Nautilus high-energy laser system, which is designed to destroy Katyushas in flight. Our air forces are working together so that the first of the F-15's are delivered as planned next year. And

we have offered Israel the AMRAAM, our most advanced air-to-air missile system, so that Israel's air power remains unmatched in the region.

Our strategic cooperation is greater than ever. We are continuing to help build Israel's high-tech capacity through the sale of supercomputers. We are even expanding cooperation in space and preparing to train Israeli astronauts. There may be a few volunteers out there, Mr. Prime Minister. *[Laughter]*

We are also working, as the Prime Minister has said, more closely than ever to defeat terrorism. This week we will complete the agreement to combat extremist violence that we began work on during my visit to Israel last month. Almost as soon as we received word of the bombings we began sending new equipment to detect explosives. Now we are committing more than \$100 million to this program for equipment and training, for development of new technologies and improved communications and coordination. And I am very pleased that in the budget I signed just 2 days ago, the first \$50 million was included in our common antiterrorist efforts.

We all know that Israel should have every tool at its disposal in the fight against terror. And we all know that the organized forces of hatred and terror threaten people not only in the Middle East, but here at home and around the world. We saw that in Oklahoma City, at the World Trade Center, in the attacks we have thwarted, in the subways of Tokyo, in the skies over Scotland. We see it all around the world. Fighting terrorism will remain one of our top law enforcement priorities for many years to come. And in order to be successful, we have to have the tools we need here, and we have to work together.

I want to thank the Congress and Members in both parties for passing the antiterrorism bill I signed into law just last week. I want to thank many of you in this audience in both parties who worked hard and lobbied hard for that legislation. It will help us to stop terrorists before they strike and to bring them to justice when they do.

Now we can more quickly expel foreigners who come here and support terrorist activities. Our prosecutors can wield new tools and

expanded penalties against those who terrorize Americans at home or abroad. And we can stop terrorists from raising money in the United States to pay for their crimes anywhere around the world.

Again, I say AIPAC has long been a powerful voice in favor of this legislation. We may not be able to always stop those who are gripped by hatred, but at least now because of your support, we will make a real difference in the fight against terror. And I pledge to you that in America, in Israel, and around the world we will not rest from these efforts until, in the words of the Psalm, "We shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flies by day."

When I was in Jerusalem last month, I placed a small symbol of the extraordinary bond of solidarity between the United States and Israel on the grave of my friend Prime Minister Rabin. It was a little stone from the South Lawn of the White House where the first accord with the Palestinians was signed. I put it there in keeping with the Jewish tradition that says one must always add to the memories of those who have died and never detract from them.

Well, it falls to us to add more to the memories of all those who have given their lives for Israel's security and for the hope of peace. And we must do this not only with stones, but in kind. We must build a peace as hard and real as any stone. And in so doing, we will add to the memory of every martyr and validate the sacrifice of every martyr, and give meaning and breath and life to the dreams of so many who have gone before.

That is my vision to you and my pledge. And I say to you, and especially to you, I will do everything I can to help us achieve it together.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:37 p.m. in the ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel; Itamar Rabinovich, Israeli Ambassador to the United States; Martin Indyk, U.S. Ambassador to Israel; Melvin Dow, president, Steve Grossman, chairman of the board, Neal Sher, executive director, Edward Levy, vice president, and Jack Bendheim, board member, American Israel Public Affairs Committee; Edgar

Bronfman, president, World Jewish Congress; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks on the National Drug Control Strategy in Coral Gables, Florida

April 29, 1996

Thank you very much. Thank you. Didn't Rachel do a good job? Give her another hand. She was great, wasn't she? *[Applause]*

Principal Heise, thank you for hosting us today, and for your fine remarks, which I heard from behind the way there. I'm delighted to be on this stage with our two Cabinet members from Miami, Attorney General Reno and Secretary Rubin, and with General McCaffrey, who moved the SOUTHCOM here and wishes he were from Miami. You can tell by the Spanish speech he gave you. And he's doing a wonderful job, and I'm very proud of him.

I want to thank three of your distinguished State officials who came in with me today who are here: Lieutenant Governor Buddy MacKay, Attorney General Bob Butterworth, and Senator Daryl Jones, who has a son here somewhere—there he is. Your son is clapping for you, Daryl.

I want to thank Alvah Chapman and Marilyn Culp and Tad Foote and local television and other media executives. Judge Goldstein, of the local drug court, I thank him and all those involved in the drug court. I thank Dorothy Perry and all the community leaders.

I want to thank all these young people in D-FY-IT. And I thank not only those who are here, but those who came out to the airport to meet me. We have the leader of America's Coast Guard, the leader of our Customs Service and others here today, along with the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury and General McCaffrey.

We are here in Miami to announce a new drug strategy because of what Miami is doing to make the children of Miami and the future of Miami drug free. I thank all of you who have been any part of that—the local officials, the religious leaders, the community leaders, the school leaders. And I agree with

Rachel that if we keep working, we can have the children of America educating the rest of us about this problem, and then it will go away for sure.

Miami has dealt with the biggest challenges that drugs present to America. And Miami knows that what I have said about the world toward which we are moving is true. We are going into a world of enormous possibility for our people, dominated by global trade and high technology. You have worked very hard to see that the people of southern Florida reap the benefits of global trade and high technology.

But you also know that the more open our borders are, the more freely people can travel, the more freely money can move and information and technology can be transferred, the more vulnerable we are to people who would seek to undermine the very fabric of civilized life, whether through terrorism, the weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, or drugs and sometimes through all of the above.

So the great challenge we face, my fellow Americans, is how to get the benefits of this world toward which we are moving and not be exposed to the forces that would undermine our ability to raise strong children in strong families in good, strong communities.

That's what this national drug strategy is about. It focuses on rising drug use among children. It confronts head-on the fact that crime and drugs are vicious co-conspirators. You heard General McCaffrey allude to that. A significant percentage of the people in the prison systems of America today are there because of drug problems. If they weren't stealing money to pay for a drug habit, dealing drugs in the first place, or behaving irrationally because of an addiction to drugs, we would be spending that money on educating our children and building our future instead of maintaining a prison system. And that's what we ought to do.

But all of you here at George Washington Carver are a shining example of what it will ultimately take to make a drug strategy work all across America, people at the grassroots level. This school—I've heard you cheering for it before. But I want you to know why we're here. We are not here by accident. And we are not here because of anything we have

done. We are here because of what you have done: zero guns, zero assaults, zero incidents of drug-related violence, zero drugs. That's where America ought to go and where America can go.

We are here because of what Miami has done. I have watched this city and this county recover from a massive storm to host the Summit of the Americas, to attract the Southern Command of the United States military, and now to set a standard that all other cities should follow in reducing the problem of drug abuse. The Coalition for a Safe and Drug-Free Community has worked hard with all the rest of the people here so that drug use dropped more than 50 percent between 1991 and 1993 alone. That was the biggest decline in any metropolitan area in the country. I'd like to see that on some of the TV shows on prime time about Miami.

Let me again thank the members of the Coalition. I thank the students here today and I thank the Attorney General, who was a founding member back when she had her other job here in Dade County—or as those of us in the administration say, back when we had a life, Janet Reno lived in Miami, and I thank her for what she did and for what you are doing.

Now while it is true that in the end this work has to be done student by student, family by family, school by school, neighborhood by neighborhood, we must acknowledge that the Nation's Government has a role to play. In this new era, when we are reducing the size of Government and its burden, when we have a Federal Establishment that today in 1996 is the smallest the National Government has been since 1965—and by the end of this year it will be the smallest it's been since 1962—we still have responsibilities to help people throughout America make the most of their own lives and their families and their communities.

And a big part of that is to make sure Americans can feel secure in their homes, on their streets, and in their schools, with drug-free homes, drug-free streets, and drug-free schools.

Our crime bill is helping reduce the crime rate by giving communities police officers, 100,000 of them, in community settings in America; banning 19 deadly assault weapons.

The Brady bill, which now requires a waiting period before you can buy a handgun, has kept 60,000 people with criminal records from purchasing guns and endangering innocent citizens. It is working.

I was so inspired by my personal experience watching your drug court here, and the Attorney General's experience when she took office, that we have worked hard to help others establish drug courts around America. There are now more than 100 of them in the United States, and I think every community ought to have one, and we're going to keep going until every community has the chance to have one.

We've also used the crime bill to help schools fight drugs and violence, to help them support programs like D.A.R.E. and GREAT, to help them with gang prevention, and when they're needed, with things like metal detectors and increased securities. We are opening the way to do more in this area.

But I want to say a special word of thanks to the people here who have taken a pledge to abstain from drugs and alcohol. You heard Rachel talk about that. I believe that if every student in every school in America took that pledge and reaffirmed it on a regular basis, a lot of these other things would not be necessary. So I'd like to ask all the students who have taken that pledge to stand today. If you took a pledge to be free of drugs and alcohol, stand up and the rest of us would like to applaud you. *[Applause]*

While not every community in America can claim the results that Miami can, you should know that every year for the last 3 years, murders have dropped and robberies have dropped and drug use has dropped. Monthly drug use today is roughly half of what it was 10 years ago in America. The number of cocaine users has fallen by 30 percent in the last 3 years alone. But we have a lot to do. And again, it's why we're at this school. The most perplexing problem that we face in this area is this: While the drug rate has gone down, drug usage among people under 18 has gone up. While the crime rate has gone down, random violence among people under 18 has gone up. The children who are here today are the battleground of today and tomorrow. They are the people for whom we must fight this great battle, and they are

the ones we must rely on to win it by working with them.

That is why I am announcing today a new and intensified strategy to battle drugs that builds and improves on the work we have done over the last 3 years, calls for more resources from the Nation than ever before, and targets those resources better than ever. This National Drug Control Strategy of 1996, as General McCaffrey said, is meant to be a 10-year plan. He worked on it very, very hard with many others. I want to thank him again for it, and I want to thank him for being willing to give up his four stars and his military command to fight America's most important battle for the future.

Very briefly, this strategy has five very concrete goals: Number one, to get young people to reject drugs—that's what you're doing here; number two, to use effective treatment and prevention to break this vicious cycle that links drugs to violent crime; third, to stop drugs at the border, the way we are doing at the Miami Customs Office where technology and street smarts are catching more drugs with less inconvenience to arriving visitors; fourth, to break up the sources of supply, whether they are cocaine farms in Colombia or methamphetamine labs in California; and finally, to reduce the terrible social and economic costs imposed by drugs on our society, \$69 billion in the last year.

Now, to meet these goals, we are asking Congress as we cut spending and move toward a balanced budget, to increase funding for the drug war by 9.3 percent. We can't stop drugs if our schools, hospitals, and communities don't have the tools they need to get the job done. We have to have the support of Congress to do this.

Make no mistake about it, this has got to be a bipartisan, American, nonpolitical effort. If we're going to keep our commitment to put 100,000 new community police officers on the street, we are going to have to do that. If we are going to keep our commitment to give schools the funds they need for the Safe and Drug Free Schools program, we have to do that. And I am proud that the budget I signed last week from the Congress included both those programs.

We are also working hard in Washington to try to protect you from new problems before they come to your doorstep, and that's an important job of the Nation's Government. I thank Secretary Rubin for getting the early warning on Rohypnol, a powerful and dangerous sedative, to stop it from flooding across our borders. I thank the Attorney General for the work she has done with General McCaffrey and others on the methamphetamine strategy. That is a deadly drug. It is gaining in popularity. In 2 years, deaths from this drug have doubled. I'm glad it's not here yet, but we have to stop it before it becomes the crack of the 1990's. And we are going after it right now.

So let me say again, if we're going to win this battle, we have to be prepared to pay the price of time, we have to be prepared to ask ourselves, each and every one of us, what is our job? This national drug control strategy is our effort to answer the question: What is our job? What is the President's job? What is the Cabinet's job? What is General McCaffrey's job?

But we know in the end it is all of you here at the community level doing your jobs that will determine the fate of the children who are here. And ultimately it is their job to say "no" to destructive forces in their lives and "yes" to the future, "no" to an empty fantasy land and "yes" to the fantasy of an unimaginable future that is out there for all of our young people who will prepare themselves for it. That is, ultimately, the goal we must all share and work for as Americans.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:46 a.m. in the George Washington Carver Middle School. In his remarks, he referred to Pregri Heise, principal, George Washington Carver Middle School; Alvah Chapman, director, Knight-Ridder, Inc.; Marilyn Culp, executive director, Miami Coalition for a Safe and Drug-Free Community; Tad Foote, president, University of Miami; Judge Stanley Goldstein, 11th Circuit; Dorothy Perry, chief executive officer, Youth Progressing, Inc.; and Rachel Berne, middle school student who introduced the President.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting the National
Drug Control Strategy**
April 29, 1996

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress the *1996 National Drug Control Strategy*. This Strategy carries forward the policies and principles of the 1994 and 1995 Strategies. It describes new directions and initiatives to confront the ever-changing challenges of drug abuse and trafficking.

This past March I convened the White House Leadership Conference on Youth, Drug Use, and Violence in order to focus the Nation's attention on two major health problems faced by young people today—drug use and violence. The conference brought together over 300 young people, parents, clergy, community and business leaders, judges, prosecutors, police, entertainers, media executives, researchers, and treatment and prevention specialists from across America to examine solutions and keep us moving forward with proven strategies. The Vice President, General Barry McCaffrey, and I met with the participants in a series of round-table discussions, discussing how to strengthen the efforts of families, the media, communities, schools, businesses, and government to reduce drug use and violence. Participants left with new energy and new ideas, determined to return home and begin implementing the solutions and strategies discussed that day.

This conference took place at an important juncture in America's ongoing fight against drug abuse. In the last few years our nation has made significant progress against drug use and related crime. The number of Americans who use cocaine has been reduced by 30 percent since 1992. The amount of money Americans spend on illicit drugs has declined from an estimated \$64 billion five years ago to about \$49 billion in 1993—a 23 percent drop. We are finally gaining ground against overall crime: drug-related murders are down 12 percent since 1989; robberies are down 10 percent since 1991.

At the same time, we have dealt serious blows to the international criminal networks that import drugs into America. Many power-

ful drug lords, including leaders of Colombia's notorious Cali cartel, have been arrested. A multinational air interdiction program has disrupted the principal air route for smugglers between Peru and Colombia. The close cooperation between the United States, Peru, and other governments in the region has disrupted the cocaine economy in several areas. Our efforts have decreased overall cocaine production and have made coca planting less attractive to the farmers who initiate the cocaine production process. And I have taken the serious step of cutting off all non-humanitarian aid to certain drug producing and trafficking nations that have not cooperated with the United States in narcotics control. Further, I have ordered that we vote against their requests for loans from the World Bank and other multi-lateral development banks. This clearly underscores the unwavering commitment of the United States to stand against drug production and trafficking.

Here at home, we have achieved major successes in arresting, prosecuting, and dismantling criminal drug networks. In Miami, the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Program, through its operational task forces, successfully concluded a major operation that resulted in the indictments of 252 individuals for drug trafficking and other drug-related crimes. Operations conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration's Mobile Enforcement Teams programs (MET), a highly successful federal tool for assisting local law enforcement, have resulted in more than 1,500 arrests of violent and predatory drug criminals in more than 50 communities across the nation.

But as the White House Leadership Conference on Youth, Drug Use, and Violence showed, now is the time to press forward. We must not let up for a moment in our efforts against drug abuse, and drug abuse by young people, particularly.

There are many reasons why young people do continue to use drugs. Chief among these are ignorance of the facts about addiction and the potency of drugs, and complacency about the danger of drugs. Unfortunately, all too often we see signs of complacency about the dangers of drug use: diminished attention to the drug problem by the national media;

the glamorization and legitimization of drug use in the entertainment industry; the codding of professional athletes who are habitual drug-users; avoidance of the issue by parents and other adults; calls for drug-legalization; and the marketing of products to young people that legitimize and elevate the use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs.

All Americans must accept responsibility to teach young people that drugs are illegal and they are deadly. They may land you in jail; they may cost you your life. We must renew our commitment to the drug prevention strategies that deter first-time drug use and stop the progression from alcohol and tobacco use to marijuana and harder drugs.

The National Drug Control Strategy is designed to prevent a new drug use epidemic through an aggressive and comprehensive full-court press that harnesses the energies of committed individuals from every sector of our society. As I said in the State of the Union, we must step up our attack against criminal youth gangs that deal in illicit drugs. We will improve the effectiveness of our cooperative efforts among U.S. defense and law enforcement agencies, as well as with other nations, to disrupt the flow of drugs coming into the country. We will seek to expand the availability and improve the quality of drug treatment. And we will continue to oppose resolutely calls for the legalization of illicit drugs. We will increase efforts to prevent drug use by all Americans, particularly young people.

The tragedy of drug abuse and drug-related crime affects us all. The National Drug Control Strategy requires commitment and resources from many individuals and organizations, and from all levels of government. For the Strategy to succeed, each of us must do our part.

We ask the Congress to be a bipartisan partner and provide the resources we need at the federal level to get the job done. I challenge state and local governments to focus on drug abuse as a top priority. We ask the media and the advertising and entertainment industries to work with us to educate our youth, and all Americans, about the dangers of drug use. Finally, we invite every American—every parent, every teacher, every law enforcement officer, every faith

leader, every young person, and every community leader—to join our national campaign to save our youth.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
April 29, 1996.

Statement on Action on Gasoline Prices

April 29, 1996

Over the last several weeks, I have been concerned about the rise in gasoline prices at the pump. Today I am directing my administration to take the following steps.

First, I am asking the Secretary of Energy to immediately begin the process of orderly sales of approximately 12 million barrels of our Nation's strategic petroleum reserves. This step was authorized by the Congress last week as part of the omnibus appropriations bill.

Second, I am asking the Secretary of Energy to review market circumstances and report back to me within 45 days about the factors that led to the runup in prices. As part of that analysis, I am asking her to evaluate the expected market prices for the remainder of the peak summer driving season.

I believe these are the appropriate steps to take at this time. My administration will continue to monitor developments in this market in the coming weeks.

Remarks at a Democratic Dinner in Coral Gables, Florida

April 29, 1996

Thank you very much, Lieutenant Governor MacKay and Senator Dodd. Thank you, Marvin Rosen, for leaving Florida for so much of the time to help me and the Democratic Party return to victory in November. I thank Howard Glick and Larry Hawkins and Mitch Berger and M.J. Parker and all others who worked to organize this phenomenally successful dinner tonight.

And I want to thank all of you for coming here and for giving us your support in our fight to make sure that America takes the right road into the 21st century.

My fellow Americans, this is a very different race than it was in 1992. In 1992 when I ran for President, I did it because I really felt that the country had no animating vision, that we did not understand as a people the changes we were going through and where we wanted to come out on the other end. We had no strategy for achieving it. And I sought to bring that contribution to that campaign. And I think the American people basically saw that race as status quo versus change.

Now this is a very different circumstance. We now have two very different visions of change before the American people. And the American people don't have to guess; they really know what those visions are. There is no option; when we vote now in 1996 we will be voting to take a certain path right into the 21st century. The only question is which road we decide to walk. There has been a lot of talk over the last couple of years about what we Democrats stand for, whether it is clear, what is the difference between the two parties. Does it matter anymore?

Well, I can tell you this: My belief is that we are going through a period of change in this country as profound as any we've endured in a hundred years, since we moved from farm to factory, from country to city. We are now moving from the cold war into the global economy in an ever more global society. We celebrated that here in Miami a couple of years ago at the Summit of the Americas.

We are moving into an economy in which all forms of endeavor, including agriculture and industry, are dominated by technology and information. If you were to come home to Arkansas with me at planting time or harvesting time, you would see farmers riding around in their machinery with computer screens, often working with software they prepared themselves to do the work that they now do.

And we've changed so much the way we work, and in the course of that, the way we live, that we are moving into a time of almost unbelievable possibility but also significant disruption. That is the fact of the time in which we live.

When I became President, I had a very clear idea, which I want to restate to you,

of what I think we ought to be working for. We ought to be working for an America in which every person, without regard to their race or their gender or how they start out in life, should have the chance to live up to their dreams if they're willing to work for it.

We ought to be working for an America in which all the incredible diversity in this country is the source of our strength, not a source of division and weakness, because we have shared values and because we respect the honest differences among us. And we ought to stop using politics as a way of dividing the American people and start uniting them again. And we ought to be working for an America that is still the world's leading source of inspiration and strength and support for peace and freedom and democracy and security and prosperity. Those are the things that we ought to do.

Now a lot of that work has to be done by all of you in your private capacities. And we know in this new world of information technology and lightning change, big, centralized bureaucracies are not as important as they once were, including the big, centralized bureaucracy of the National Government. But that does not mean we do not need a Government in Washington and a spirit in Washington and a presence in the White House committed to those three ideas, that everybody should be able to live out their dreams if they'll work for it, that we ought to be coming together, not being driven apart, and that we must continue to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and democracy. That is what has driven me for these 3½ years.

So I say to you, we have—our friends in the Republican Party have condemned the Government and talked about how bad it is. And they say that it's the source of all of our problems, but it was the Democrats who reduced the size of Government so that now in Washington, DC, the United States Government is the smallest that it's been since 1965. They condemned heavy-handed Federal regulation, but we have gotten rid of more regulations than they did. We have given more authority to State and local governments than they ever did—ask Lieutenant Governor MacKay. There are over one mil-

lion fewer families on welfare today than there were the day I took office because we've given 40 States the power to have welfare reform, to move people from welfare to work.

But when the great crisis over the budget came, and the power of Congress and the majority was used to shut the Government down because I wouldn't go along and Senator Dodd wouldn't go along and the Members of our party wouldn't go along with doing things to Medicare which were unconscionable and unnecessary to save the program; with walking away from a Medicaid program that not only provides care for poor children and pregnant women but also for middle class families with children with disabilities and with parents in nursing homes; with an absolute evisceration of the environmental protection policy of the country, which had been for 25 years a bipartisan policy, shared by Republicans and Democrats until that time; and with a reduction in our commitment to education at a time when what you can earn is more tied to what you can learn than at any time in our history. We said no.

We said there is a national responsibility. There is a national responsibility for putting 100,000 police on the street. There's a national responsibility for helping schools to be drug free and to be safe. There is a national responsibility for, in other words, growing the economy, expanding opportunity, helping the American people, coming together and maintaining the leadership of the United States of America. That is what this choice is all about in 1996, which road are we going to walk into the future.

There's a lot of talk about the word "empowerment." And I used it a lot in 1992 and long before I decided to run for President. I believe in it. To use the words of my friend, James Carville, and Larry Hawkins said, "Everybody in America ought to read James Carville's book, 'We're Right and They're Wrong.'" So I'll flack for it tonight. But Carville said, "You know, people criticize the Democrats for giving people fish when we ought to be teaching them to fish, but our opponents want to drain the pond."

Now, what does that mean? That means if people can be taught to fish, it's a lot better

than giving them fish. That means no one should get anything if they can do for themselves. But it also means don't drain the pond.

Empowerment means more than giving people a choice. The great French writer, Victor Hugo, once observed that the rich and poor are equally free to spend the night under the bridge. Empowerment means not only having the choice but having the capacity to exercise the choice. That's why we're for education and safe streets and a clean environment and a strong economic policy and a strong foreign policy.

Now sometimes we reach agreement. And when we do, I'm happy. If you think about the good things that have happened in the last year-and-a-half—and I'll just mention some—I signed a budget bill last week that protects education and the environment and our major economic programs and reduces the deficit so that now we'll have 4 years of deficit reduction. And I'll keep my commitment to you: We will cut the deficit by more than half in just 4 years. We did that.

And I signed a very tough anti-terrorism bill which will give us the tools we need to kick terrorists out of the country when we find them here from other countries, to kick people out of this country when they come here and raise money for terrorists, which is wrong, to do more to prevent terrorist incidents and to catch terrorists when they commit terrorism. We passed that bill. That was a good thing.

Just a few weeks ago I signed a telecommunications bill which will create at a minimum hundreds of thousands of very high wage jobs in the next few years.

What do all those things have in common? They were passed by a Congress overwhelmingly working in a bipartisan fashion, putting aside the labels and the ideologies and the extremism of the past and the recent past and working together for the practical benefit of all Americans. When we have done that, we do just fine.

In this budget bill, Congress gave me the authority to do something that I did this afternoon. I want to tell you about it. I've been very concerned about this dramatic, although apparently temporary, rise in the price of gasoline at the pumps. It affects the

take-home pay of working people who have to commute to work. It offers a great problem for tourism centers like Florida. We're about to get into the high driving season, and if gasoline is 20 percent higher, there are not going to be as many people driving as far to do whatever it is they're going to do this summer.

So today I instructed the Secretary of Energy to immediately begin the orderly sale of about 12 million barrels of our Nation's strategic petroleum reserve to try to moderate the price of fuel. And I've also asked Secretary O'Leary to report back to me within 45 days about all the elements that caused this sudden burst in the gasoline prices to determine whether it is likely to be short-term or long-term, what the likely impact on our economy would be.

Now I say that in this context. The Congress gave me explicit authority to do that, and I applaud them for doing it. What is unique about it? Well, we stopped all these partisan wars and rolled up our sleeves and sat down and said, "What would be a good thing to do for America?" Not which party can gain the advantage, not can we put the President in a corner and threaten to shut the Government down, but what would be good for America? It would be good to reduce the deficit and increase our investment in education, the growth of the economy, the protection of the environment. And, oh by the way, here's some authority to release barrels of oil from the strategic petroleum reserves.

I say that because I want to follow up on something that Senator Dodd said and Lieutenant Governor MacKay said. This is a very great country. We need two strong parties. There are plenty of differences between us. But when the most extreme position dominates a party's governing, so that governing is less important than making a point, even if the point requires you to shut the Government down, then we have gone too far.

Now the same thing is true on the issues before us. And I want to talk a little more about where we go from here. But there are two great issues still before us. We could solve them both and make the American people much better off. We've now adopted a budget 6 months late for the remainder of

this year. I would have happily signed it on the first day of this year, the very first day of this fiscal year.

We have not yet adopted a balanced budget plan, but we have identified savings in common to both the Republican and Democratic plans that are more than enough to balance the budget, provide a modest tax cut, and still protect Medicare, Medicaid, and our investments in education and the environment and economic development and in reducing the crime rate and violence in this country. We could do all that.

The question is, will we? The answer is, depends upon whether the majority in Congress decides to play politics a long time before the November election or will it go back and work with me in good faith to pass the right sort of balanced budget plan for America. That's what we ought to do. There's plenty of time for the elections after the conventions this summer. Let's go back to work and give the American people the balanced budget plan they deserve.

There's another big issue that will tell a big tale about where we're going now. That's the so-called Kassebaum-Kennedy bill, a bipartisan bill that passed the Senate last week—listen to this—100 to zero. You say, "Well, if anything got a hundred votes, could it have any significance?" You bet it does. You know what it does? The Kassebaum-Kennedy bill says that you cannot lose your health insurance. If you change jobs or lose your job, you can still keep it. It says that you cannot be denied the right to purchase health insurance just because somebody in your family has been sick. It can provide immediate help in health security to millions of Americans who are self-employed, who are working in small businesses, who are working for businesses that may go broke or that may have to lay them off for a while. It can make a huge difference. That's why it passed 100 to nothing. It's a very big deal.

But the version of the bill in the House, it didn't pass by 435 to zero in the House. Why? Because there are all these other things in the bill that are extremely controversial, not necessary to protect the health care interest of American families and designed basically to jam those who don't agree with them into voting for them and me into

signing them in order to get the good things of the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill.

So watch this. Why don't we take the things we disagree with and throw them into the fall election, and let's have it part of all the debates? But why don't we pass Kennedy-Kassebaum pure and clear, 100 to nothing, one more time for the American people? That's what we ought to do.

If you ask me to say in a sentence, Mr. President, what is the role of the President and the Government in Washington as we move into this new era, I would say it is to give citizens, families, and communities the ability they need to meet their challenges and seize their opportunities and make the most of their own lives. And to do it not with big, centralized bureaucracies, but with whatever it takes to forge the kind of partnership that will genuinely empower people, genuinely empower people to do that, and to maintain our commitment abroad for security, peace, freedom, and democracy.

Let's just take a few simple issues. The issue of education. Today I was here announcing the new national drug control strategy at a school that has no guns, no violence, and no drugs for the last 2 years. Now that was done by the people at the school—the principal, the parents, the teachers, the kids, they deserve the credit for that. The National Government will never be able to replace that magic and shouldn't try. But we should make sure that every school has the resources to provide what needs to be provided to be safe and drug free. And that's why I fought to save the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act.

Well, let's take another issue. One of the news magazines this week has the cover—the news magazine—how expensive it is to send a child to college—a thousand dollars a month. That won't touch it for some of you, depending on where your children go. But we know that every young person in America ought to have the opportunity to go to college. That's why we worked so hard to totally redesign the student loan program, so that anybody could borrow money to go to college and pay it back as a percentage of the income they earn from whatever job they get, so that no child should ever drop out of school because of the burden of the money

that has to be borrowed. That's important and we should keep that.

That is why I've asked the Congress to invest more money in college scholarships and college loans, and why I said to them, "If we're going to give families a tax cut in this country, let's give them a deduction for the cost of college tuition." It would be the best money we ever spent in terms of a tax incentive.

Let me take a controversial issue that always gets me a few demonstrators when I come to Florida. We have very different views in Washington about the environment, although now those views are quickly being blurred as we come toward election day. Here's what I believe. I think Teddy Roosevelt, our first great environmental President and a Republican, was right. I believe that we cannot preserve the American economy unless we have a system for sustaining our natural resources, our land, our air, our water, our trees, our species. That's what I believe.

I believe you can't preserve the very idea of American democracy unless people at least have some ability to preserve the nature, the heritage that they grow up around. I believe you can't maintain the integrity of the democracy of this country if millions of kids live within a couple of blocks of a toxic waste dump and cities have no devices to clean up the environmental pollution of former eras when we didn't know what we were doing. That's what I believe.

I believe Florida will not be able to sustain the population growth that is coming unless you find a way to save the Everglades. That's what I believe. And I believe your Nation has a responsibility to help you. I think it is a national treasure, as well as a local treasure.

I believe there are a lot of good people in the sugar industry. There are a lot of good people who have worked hard in that. I believe that many of those companies are doing a better job today with conservation practices than they were doing just a few years ago. I know that is true. All these things are true.

The question is, who is going to pay what in order to save the Everglades. I believe that we can find a way to sustain the economy of Florida in the short run while we move

to preserve it in the long run and while we preserve one of the globe's most precious natural resources. We have to save the Everglades. That's what I believe, and I think the National Government has a responsibility to do that.

I believe that we did the right thing to take action in Washington to try to reduce the hazards of young people beginning to smoke cigarettes. Three thousand kids illegally begin to smoke every day, and a thousand of them will die early because of it, and it is wrong, and we ought to stop it. That is what we are trying to do. But it is very controversial.

I believe we did the right thing in Washington to pass the Brady bill, but it was very controversial. All I know is there are 60,000 people with criminal records who were unable to buy handguns in the last 2 years and to go out and victimize other people because that law was on the books. It was the right thing to do.

You have to ask yourself, what do you believe? None of this had to do with a big, centralized bureaucracy, but I believe we were doing the right things. And as you look ahead, there will be more that has to be done to protect the environment, to invest in education and technology and the growth of the economy, to continue to reach out to the rest of the world with broader commitments to free and fair trade.

And we also have to stand up for freedom. I know a lot of the things that I have done in foreign policy have been controversial, but you know, one of the things that I see, and I wish every one of you could see, is that when I leave the borders of the United States, I am no longer just Bill Clinton or the President. I become all of you, the symbol of America. It is the greatest honor you can imagine.

And I know that there are things that if we don't do them they won't be done. That's why we stood up for peace in Bosnia. That's why we took the initiative to try to bring peace in Northern Ireland, working with the Irish and the British Governments. That's why we have worked so hard for so long in the Middle East and why the Secretary of State was there to try to bring an end to the violence between Lebanon and Israel. And

that's why I signed the Helms-Burton bill and why I am working for a free Cuba.

Now the problem with our involvement around the world is that most everybody can find something they like about that. You hear the different sources of cheers there. But what I want to convince you of is that the general principle is right, too. Think about what the world will be like 20 or 30 years from now. The United States may not have the same dominance we have now. I'm convinced we'll be the strongest country in the world, but others will grow richer. Others will exercise influence. What we do now in this critical period coming out of the cold war and moving into a global economy and a global society will have a profound impact on whether other great countries stand up for peace and freedom, whether other great countries define their greatness in terms of whether they can help people live their own lives or whether they can dominate people just because they're smaller and weaker.

And because no one believes we wish to dominate anyone and our purpose for peace and freedom and prosperity and democracy is so clear, we are able to do things that no other country can do now. And I believe we are safer because of it. There are no nuclear missiles pointed at America's children for the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age. We are working to reduce that threat more every day.

We have cooperation from other countries in fighting terrorism at home and abroad. And I can tell you, if you look at terrorism, the drug threat, organized crime, money laundering, if you look at the proliferation of dangerous weapons, every one of these things requires the United States to lead and cooperate, and they will affect how your children and your grandchildren live and what kind of future we have in the 21st century.

So I ask you all, when you go into the next few months—I thank you for your financial contributions. I am profoundly grateful. We will spend the money well. Marvin Rosen will make sure we spend the money well. But every one of you who can be here tonight is here because you have accomplished something in your own life. You will be listened to. There are people who look to you. There are people who will listen to what you

have to say and care what you think and care how you feel about your country. And I'm telling you, the American people have to decide how we're going into the 21st century. There is no status quo option, and you don't have to guess about our views. We now have almost 2 years where the leaders of the two parties and their philosophies have become clear. And that is a great, good fortune.

I believe that it's clear that we did what we said we'd do in 1992. We have cut the deficit in half, 8½ million new jobs, a new commitment to invest in our people and our future and our communities. We did that. I believe in Florida you can see it. The unemployment rate is 2 percent lower. We brought the Summit of the Americas here. We brought SOUTHCOM here. We have a commitment here to help people do what they can to deal with the challenges you face today.

It is clear that we have a record. But the far more important thing is, this is a record to build on, not to sit on. We have created jobs, but we haven't raised everybody's income. We have to do more to allow people who are working for a living to be able to generate lifetime education, lifetime access to health care, and develop a pension they can carry around with them, too, if they move from job to job.

We have done a lot of things to try to bring the American people together and to bring down the crime rate and to reestablish a common national commitment to the preservation of our environment, but there is a lot more to do. We have done a lot of things to do things to make the Government work better and to be smaller and less burdensome to you, but Lord knows there is more to do.

And we have taken a stand for America's role in the world. We dare not adopt the easy, short-term, but short-sighted isolationist position that others have advocated. So I ask you—I thank you for what you have done here tonight, but it's a long time between now and November.

So I ask you to take every opportunity you can to be good citizens between now and then. Talk with your friends and your neighbors and your co-workers. Engage people over coffee. Visit with them on the weekends when you run into them wherever they are

and say, you know, this is an election about America's future. This is an election which will determine what kind of country we're going to be in the 21st century. This is an election which will determine what our children and our grandchildren will live like. And this is an election in which I have taken a stand that I want to tell you about. That's what I want you to do. If you do, it will be fine.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:48 p.m. at the Biltmore Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Marvin Rosen, finance director, Democratic National Committee; Larry Hawkins, Dade County commissioner; and Democratic fundraisers Mitch Berger and M.J. Parker. A portion of the content of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at the Signing Ceremony for the United States-Israel Counterterrorism Accord and an Exchange With Reporters

April 30, 1996

The President. Good afternoon, Mr. Prime Minister and members of the Israeli and American delegations, ladies and gentlemen. For the past 3 years, Israel and the United States have worked hand in hand to advance the peace process in the Middle East. Today, with this U.S.-Israel Counterterrorism Cooperation Accord, we strengthen our partnership to stop the enemies of peace.

With every new step along the path to peace, its enemies grow more and more desperate. They know a new day is dawning in the Middle East, that the vast majority of its people want to enjoy the blessings of a normal life. Their answer, more violence and terror, more bullets and bombs, may seem senseless, but it is the product of cold calculation. By murdering innocent people, they aim to kill the growing hope for peace itself.

We will not do what the enemies of peace want. We will not let our anger turn us away from the pursuit of peace in the Middle East. Maintaining our resolve for peace does not mean, however, turning the other cheek. We must do everything in our power to stop the

killing and bring the terrorists to justice. That is the only way to give those who have chosen peace the confidence they need that they have made the right choice and the courage to keep moving forward.

This agreement does just that by deepening the cooperation between our two countries in the fight against terrorism. Prime Minister Peres and I worked on it during my visit to Israel last month, in the wake of a terrible string of suicide bombings. Now we have agreed upon areas for greater cooperation, on information sharing, on research and development, on training and technical assistance, on investigation, prosecution, and extradition. In each one we will look at very practical ways in which we can work together better.

I am pleased to sign this accord. And I am also pleased that the budget I signed just last week included the \$50 million I requested earlier this year for our joint antiterrorism efforts in this year, including today's accords. I thank the Congress for their prompt action here and for the bipartisan support it received.

To my friend the Prime Minister and the people of Israel, let me say the United States stands with Israel through good times and bad, because our countries share the same ideals: freedom, tolerance, democracy. We know that wherever those ideals are under siege in one country they are threatened everywhere. We have never been more determined to achieve and to defend those ideals and to achieve our goal of a just and lasting peace for all the people of the Middle East.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Peres. I would like to thank from the depths of my heart, in the name of the people of Israel, the President, his delegation, his team, and him, personally, for really showing the deepest understanding that one can hope for, the immediate response whenever it is necessary, and the friendship that he has offered time and again over the last years.

I see the difference between the camp of terror and the free world. The camp of terror is operating under orders; it's disciplined; it's organized. The camp of freedom keeps its freedom. You cannot lead the camp of free-

dom unless you have a leader of great inspiration and outstanding capacity.

In my own judgment, Bill Clinton has this great capacity to inspire the whole free world with his ideas; with his determination; with his capacity to distinguish what is right and what is wrong, what is immediate and what is long-range, what is support and what is response. I feel myself very lucky to see a person like him standing ahead and trying to lead the whole world to peace and to peace for everybody, not just for us, the Israelis, but also for our neighbors; not just for the Middle East, but for Bosnia, Haiti, or other places.

We are going and departing by the end of this century a history of bloodshed, and with Godspeed let's hope that we're entering a different world of peace and understanding.

The President played a major role in bringing peace between us and the Jordanians, between us and the Palestinians. He and his Secretary of State are now opening a new chapter to bring peace between us, Syria, and Lebanon that may be the last peace which is necessary in order to make the peace comprehensive and all-embracing.

Mr. President, I really with a full heart of thanks, would like to express both our admiration and gratefulness to you, to your administration, to the American Congress, to the American people. The world is a better place to live with this sort of a policy and this sort of leadership.

Thank you very much.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, those agreements you're talking about that you'd like to have by all accounts will require Israel giving up territory, buffer zone. The help you got on this trip—antimissile help, counterterrorism help—will that make it easier for you to relinquish territory in order to get an agreement with Syria and with Lebanon?

Prime Minister Peres. You're asking me?

Q. Yes, sir.

Prime Minister Peres. We don't intend to remain in Lebanon anyway. We don't have any territorial ambitions concerning Lebanon. And on the first right occasion our

army will be more than happy to leave the territory of Lebanon.

We do recognize the international border between Lebanon and ourselves. If the Lebanese Government will take charge and the Lebanese Army will become the only armed authority in Lebanon and disarm all the other terroristic organizations, I see very little reason for us to remain in Lebanon.

Q. Yes, sir, but I asked you about Syria and Lebanon, and I asked you if the agreements and the help you've gotten here on this visit will ease your giving up territory, which you're committed to anyhow we know. Does it make it easier for you?

Prime Minister Peres. Well, you're talking about territory, and I'm talking about peace. Territory——

Q. I'm talking about land for peace.

Prime Minister Peres. I understand. I mean, if it wouldn't be done what we are doing here, I'm afraid that terror would win the day, and that would be the end of the peace process. We consider the last campaign as a campaign against peace. Now to answer your question, we have announced that in order to attain peace we are ready to make territorial compromise. Don't expect me now to lay the map on the table.

The President. If I could just say one other thing related to this, this last agreement that was reached and the first one in writing to restore the cease-fire and to set up a monitoring mechanism that involves Israel and Lebanon and Syria, and involves France, who has been very active in this, and then has a larger consultative group that involves Russia and other countries. Because this is in writing and because it gives us a chance to restore a normal life there, if this can be properly implemented, I think that it will be a good signal or a good, if you will, a test run to see how—whether other progress can be made.

And I have talked to the Prime Minister about this. We are all very concerned about the civilians, the innocent people in Northern Israel, and all the people in southern Lebanon who have lost loved ones and have suffered great economic disruption. I think we have to implement this agreement faithfully and help the Lebanese to rebuild their infra-

structure and restore the stability of their populations.

And I appreciate what the Prime Minister has said to me about that. I wanted to thank you for that.

Prime Minister Peres. I told the President that Israel will clearly respect religiously the understanding that was achieved by the Secretary and his team upon the invitation of the President. Then I told the President that Israel will participate in the effort to restore the damages in Lebanon, together with other nations, and we shall do so.

The President. Thank you for that.

Q. Mr. President, The Washington Post wrote today that you are betting on Mr. Peres as the next Prime Minister, and rightly so. Is that the case?

The President. Well, let me say, first of all, in democracies we have—we schedule elections. And that's a good thing. That reminds everybody that the people are in charge. But I think it was not only appropriate it was virtually necessary for the Prime Minister to come here at this time, in the wake of recent events not only in Lebanon but some of the developments in their relationship between Israel and the PLO—as I think all of you know, Mr. Arafat will be here in the next couple of days—so I think his trip here is entirely appropriate, and it was the right thing to do.

The United States has always said that we do not interfere in the internal decisions of other countries, and Israel and the United States are friends and allies and will be no matter who is elected. I hope that will also be the case no matter who is elected in November in the United States. So our policy on that has not changed and will not and should not.

Russian and Israeli Elections

Q. But, Mr. President, you said in Moscow recently, regarding the Russian election, that elections have consequences, and you did not dispute that that election would have consequences for relations between your government and whatever government is there. Is that not also true here, sir?

The President. Well, and for the Russian people. Then it depends, obviously, on what happens afterward. But all elections have

consequences. But the people who decide what the consequences are are the citizens of the country, in this case, the citizens of Israel. You know, they've shown pretty good judgment for quite a long while now, and I'm sure that the Prime Minister would join me in saying that they're in the driver's seat on that question, not me and not anyone else.

Israeli Response to Terrorist Attacks

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, you spoke of the last bombing campaign, so to speak, the four bombings that occurred within little more than a week. In the weeks since there have been no—I hate to use the word “successful”—bombings in Israel. To what would you attribute that?

Prime Minister Peres. To three things: To the conference in Sharm al-Sheikh that was initiated by the President and created a spirit of cooperation and understanding to work together in order to stop the acts of bombing and suicidal terror. The second is the more serious measures that Yasser Arafat has taken in Gaza and the territories. I feel that he really started to fight terror, and I say it with appreciation. And the third is because Israel itself—maybe that is from our point of view the first thing—got ourself organized to face this danger. I cannot say that we have a full-fledged answer to the problem, but we are by far much more organized and ready to prevent these sort of actions.

The President. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:57 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

United States-Israel Joint Statement April 30, 1996

President Clinton and Prime Minister Peres have concluded two days of intensive discussions on a broad range of issues relating to the U.S.-Israeli relationship. Those discussions reflect the deep, long-standing and unique bonds of friendship which have characterized the U.S.-Israeli relationship and the legacy of shared values, common interests, and mutual respect for democracy that have made this close and special relationship endure.

The President and Prime Minister reviewed the extent of the U.S.-Israeli relationship in all its dimensions. They agreed that this cooperation in security, economic, and diplomatic areas is grounded in institutions that are functioning extremely effectively to the benefit of both countries. At the same time, they agreed that, in view of continuing threats to regional peace and stability, and in particular the dangers posed by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and advanced military technologies, U.S.-Israeli strategic cooperation will grow in importance.

To this end, the President and the Prime Minister agreed that a steering committee headed by the U.S. Secretary of State and the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs would be established to explore means of enhancing and, where appropriate, formalizing, that cooperation. Two working groups will report to the steering committee. The first, dealing with security and defense matters, will consider all options including the possibility of more formal security accords, for how best to meet common threats in the years to come. It will also identify ways to maximize the effectiveness of U.S. aid to Israel. The second will deal with other policy matters relating to U.S.-Israeli strategic cooperation.

The two leaders affirmed that the strategic partnership between the two countries will continue to be based on two key principles: first, the United States unshakable commitment to Israel's security and its determination to minimize the risks and costs Israel confronts as it pursues peace; and second, the U.S.-Israeli mutual commitment to a comprehensive peace and their determination to move toward that goal.

With respect to Israel's security, the President specifically reaffirmed the United States commitment to maintain Israel's qualitative edge and to preserve and to strengthen Israel's capability to deter and defend itself, by itself, against any adversary or likely combination of adversaries.

The President and Prime Minister took great pride in signing the U.S.-Israel Counter-Terrorism Cooperation Accord. This agreement sets out practical measures enabling their two countries to make the best possible use of expertise, resources, and ca-

pabilities in the war against terror. A Joint Counter-Terrorism Group has been established to monitor and oversee the implementation of the agreement. Israel and the United States also agreed to seek to coordinate their efforts with the international effort against terror launched at Sharm al-Sheikh on March 13, 1996.

The President and the Prime Minister also took note of the joint statement on theater missile defense cooperation signed by the Prime Minister and Secretary of Defense Perry April 28. The United States and Israel recognize the defense of Israel will be made more effective by undertaking necessary steps to ensure that Israel's theater missile defenses are supported by related United States capabilities. The two leaders expressed satisfaction with the positive results to date of the ongoing bilateral dialogue on issues relating to the transfer of equipment and technology to third countries.

With respect to their determination to achieve a comprehensive peace, the two leaders agreed on the importance of implementation of agreements reached and the need to expand the orbit of Arab-Israeli peacemaking with a view toward achieving normal, peaceful relations between Israel and all its Arab neighbors. They welcomed the decision by the Palestinian National Council to cancel all the provisions of the Palestinian National Covenant which deny Israel's right to exist or are otherwise inconsistent with the September 1993 exchange of letters between Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat. This action is an important demonstration by the Palestinians of their commitment to honor the terms of the 1993 Oslo Accords.

The President and Prime Minister also expressed satisfaction with the improved understanding reached last week on Southern Lebanon as a result of Secretary of State Christopher's negotiating efforts and after discussions with the governments of Israel and Lebanon and in consultation with Syria. They noted the importance of prompt activation of the monitoring committee and consultative group established by the understanding.

Finally, the President and the Prime Minister agreed on the need to end the Arab

boycott and to eliminate discrimination against Israel in all international organizations, including the United Nations.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

April 30, 1996

Cattle Prices

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, first let me—I want to thank this bipartisan congressional delegation from cattle-producing States for coming in. Cattle producers, by numbers, represent the largest single segment of America's agricultural economy. Cattle prices are at a 10-year low, and feed prices are at—are or have been recently at an all-time high. And we want to discuss some potential recommendations for action the Secretary of Agriculture might take, using traditional means at his disposal to help to deal with this situation and help these producers through this difficult time.

I want to thank the Members of Congress who requested this meeting and who brought this matter to our attention, and I'm looking forward to the meeting.

Q. How much traditional beef are you going to buy, Mr. President?

The President. The Secretary of Agriculture will have an announcement later, once we have time to talk through our options here.

Q. Can you act quickly?

Q. Will you call up the conservation reserve for more grazing nationwide?

The President. Well, we will issue an announcement after the meeting; the Secretary of Agriculture will.

Yes, we're going to act quickly. We won't fool around with it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:43 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Proclamation 6889—Loyalty Day, 1996*April 30, 1996**By the President of the United States of America***A Proclamation**

In his inaugural address, President John F. Kennedy said, "Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty." The members of our Armed Forces have long responded to such a call, though their task has often been difficult and fraught with peril. Drawing on an abiding devotion to country, America's service men and women have faced loneliness and danger, grave injury and death, to protect our Nation's interests and to reach out to others by providing humanitarian assistance.

In pausing to honor all those who have dedicated their lives to our freedom, let us reflect on their deep commitment to the fundamental ideals of independence, justice, and equality—the very foundations of our way of life—and draw inspiration from their shining example. For more than 200 years, America's shores have embraced immigrants seeking opportunity, while our system of government has encouraged people around the world who struggle against tyranny and oppression. Following the brave men and women who wear our Nation's uniform, let us each do our part to strengthen this legacy and to ensure that future generations will enjoy and cherish the precious liberties we hold so dear.

To nurture loyalty to and love of country, the Congress, by Public Law 85-529, has designated May 1 of each year as "Loyalty Day." We spend this day in celebration of our Constitution and Bill of Rights, and we honor the extraordinary sacrifices made by the members of our Armed Forces throughout our Nation's proud history.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 1, 1996, as Loyalty Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities, including recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. I also call upon government offi-

cials to display the flag on all government buildings and grounds.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 1, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 2.

Proclamation 6890—Law Day, U.S.A., 1996*April 30, 1996**By the President of the United States of America***A Proclamation**

For more than three decades, we have set aside the first day of May to honor the role our legal system plays in maintaining our country's greatness, to celebrate the precious freedoms our citizens have enjoyed since America's beginnings, and to recognize the crucial role of the law in ensuring our security and prosperity. Today, as we confront the threats of domestic and international terrorism and the violence that plagues our neighborhoods and schools, it is more important than ever for Americans to understand the extraordinary legacy left to us by our Founders and to reaffirm the ideals of liberty, equality, and justice.

This year's theme, "The Constitution: The Original American Dream," underscores the centrality of this precious document in our national life. The doctrines set forth in our Constitution have made possible our progress and unparalleled history of freedom. Written more than 200 years ago, its measures were crafted by people who believed in individual rights and who understood that liberty must be the basis for our system of laws. As we approach a new century, we can be proud that our remarkable, dynamic Constitution, while reflecting the mores and cul-

ture of its time, continues to express America's profound commitment to human dignity.

We celebrate the Constitution as a model for other nations around the world, as the purest expression of American law, and as the ultimate authority for our statutes, judicial decisions, and Executive actions. But its power also depends on an informed, involved citizenry. Each of us must take personal responsibility for our actions and respect the rights of others. In homes, schools, neighborhoods, and businesses we must honor the rule of law and cherish the promise of equality and opportunity for all people. Every American must work to see that our Nation's legal system remains a model for the rest of the world and that future generations will continue to share its blessings.

On this day and throughout the year, let us consider the written instruments that have so profoundly shaped our experience and pay tribute to all those who enforce and maintain our legal and judicial systems—including police officers, community policing volunteers, lawyers, and members of our independent judiciary. Their efforts help to ensure that Americans will always enjoy individual liberties and a just society.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, in accordance with Public Law 87-20 of April 7, 1961, do hereby proclaim May 1, 1996, as Law Day, U.S.A. I urge all Americans to recognize the rule of law as the basis for freedom in our democratic society and to learn more about the United States Constitution. I call upon members of the legal profession, civic associations, educators, librarians, public officials, and the media to promote the observance of this day with appropriate programs and activities. I also call upon public officials to display the flag of the United States on all government buildings throughout the day.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:51 a.m., May 1, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 2.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and an Exchange With Reporters

May 1, 1996

Middle East Peace Process

The President. First, let me say I am very pleased to have Chairman Arafat in the Oval Office today. We need to take this opportunity to take stock about where we are with our common efforts in the Middle East. I had a good visit with Prime Minister Peres yesterday, and I look forward to this one.

I do want to make two specific points before we begin. First of all, I want to applaud the action that Chairman Arafat has taken in keeping the commitment he made at the Sharm al-Sheikh meeting to revise the Palestinian Covenant. I think that was applauded by all Americans.

And secondly, we now have to work hard on where we go from here. I want to talk to him about what we can do to improve the welfare of the Palestinian people and what we can do to continue to work together to improve security for all the people in the region. And I'm looking forward to that conversation.

Palestinian State

Q. Mr. President, do you endorse a Palestinian State as we did so avidly the creation of the State of Israel?

The President. I endorse the continuation of the talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis to resolve that problem.

Q. Well, how does the U.S. feel?

The President. We are going to do everything we have done—we can do, just as we have since I took office, not to get in the way of these parties making a permanent peace that suits them. That's what we want to do.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Chairman Arafat, can we ask you how you view the state of Israel-Palestinian rela-

tions in the aftermath of the Israeli military campaign in southern Lebanon?

Chairman Arafat. First of all, I have to thank His Excellency for giving me this opportunity. It is a great privilege from His Excellency. And no doubt, it is a very important opportunity to speak about how to push forward to strengthen more and more the peace process which we cannot forget His Excellency was from the beginning, which started here under his provision.

Q. How are relations now with Israel in the aftermath of that military action in southern Lebanon?

Chairman Arafat. What is important is that the efforts to stop all the military activities has succeeded, and the two sides have retained back to the agreement of 1993, which is very important, and this is also because of His Excellency's efforts and Mr. Christopher's shuttling visits.

Q. Could President Asad learn anything from your example, sir?

Chairman Arafat. I am sure that President Asad will follow up in his Syrian track the same line so that we can achieve a comprehensive, lasting peaceful solution in the whole area.

The President. Thank you.

Gas Tax

Q. Are you going for a gas tax repeal?

The Vice President. That's a good place to leave it, Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International]. [Laughter]

Q. But what is the answer?

The Vice President. Thank you.

Q. You've got a new press secretary here. [Laughter]

The President. He's always been better at it. [Laughter]

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, when will——

Q. —Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital?

The President. Let me begin by making a statement if I might. I am delighted to have this opportunity to meet with Chairman Arafat. When we met at Sharm al-Sheikh he said that there would be a revision in the

Palestinian Covenant by the 1st of May. Under difficult circumstances, he kept that commitment. And now it's time for us to discuss the continuation of the peace process, what we can do to help improve the welfare of the Palestinian people, which I know is uppermost on his mind, and we are very concerned about that, and what we can do together to improve the security for all the people in the region. So we're going to discuss all these issues.

Q. Mr. President, when will we see that Israeli negotiations are going to continue to complete the circle of peace that you are talking about?

The President. I believe that they will continue shortly, and we're going to discuss that.

And as to your question, ma'am, my position from the day I got here is still the same position. I believe that those matters are going to have to be worked out by the parties in the region. I do not believe the United States can serve any useful purpose by getting in the middle of decisions which have to be resolved by the parties themselves.

Our purpose is to try to speed the peace process along and to help those like Chairman Arafat who take risks for peace. When people take risks for peace, we want to minimize those risks, and we want to do what we can to help improve life for ordinary people in the region. And we intend to do that, and that's what we're going to discuss here.

Abu Abbas

Q. Mr. President, 99 Senators asked for you to, and for Chairman Arafat, to authorize the extradition of Abu Abbas, the mastermind of the *Achille Lauro* hijacking. Will you ask the Justice Department to issue an extradition request?

And Chairman Arafat, would you honor such a request if it came from the United States?

Chairman Arafat. We should not forget that Abu Abbas came and attended the PNC and voted to change the Covenant of the PLO and to support the peace process.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. Arafat, Mr. Peres said this week that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel forever,

and Mr. Savir said the right to return is not going to be given to the Palestinians. What are you going to talk about in the final talks of negotiations, only the settlement?

Chairman Arafat. No, according to what has been agreed upon and what had been signed in Washington and in Cairo and in Washington, that this has to be discussed with other matters—Jerusalem—settlements, borders, and relation with neighbors.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:03 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Hafiz al-Asad is President of Syria; and Uri Savir is the Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry.

Remarks Honoring the United States Olympic Committee's Champions in Life

May 1, 1996

Thank you very much. Let me say that whoever organized this program so that I could follow Buddy Lee—[*laughter*—should take up another line of work. [*Laughter*] Wasn't he wonderful? Let's give him another hand. [*Applause*]

And thank you, Bonnie Blair, for your story and your example. Thank you, Ralph Neal, for letting us come here to Eastern. I thank the Senior High School Band, and I thank the wonderful Eastern High School Choir that sings for us every Christmas I'm told. I thank the students from Elliot and Payne and the Head Start kids who are here. Thank you. I want to thank Al Oerter and the representatives of the U.S. Olympic Committee, and all the Champions in Life who are here.

I am so honored to be here with you today. And I hope that all of you have enjoyed this just as much as I have and has gotten just as much as I have out of it.

You know, I'm very proud that the United States is going to be hosting the Olympics again and that this is the 100th anniversary of the modern games. I'm proud that there will be people from 197 different nations coming here. And when I see these folks behind me, the Olympians and the Paralympians, I know that they will see America at its best.

They'll see our diversity and our unity. They'll see that we have differences that

don't divide us. They'll see that we understand individual excellence and teamwork. They'll see, as Buddy Lee said, that no champion wins alone, not in athletics and not in life. There's always a parent who cares or a teacher who listens or a coach who believes or a friend who encourages or a church and community that supports.

And behind them, there must be an America—an America where every child, without regard to race or gender or however they start out in life, has a chance to make the most of his or her own life through a decent education and safe streets and a clean environment and a brighter future.

We know that it takes extraordinary individual effort to achieve. The Vice President talked about Jeff Blatnick's heroism in the face of his cancer. We know that there are incredible stories of heroism here on this stage and throughout the Olympic teams: people like Deanna Sodoma, a cyclist until she was paralyzed, and now she will race in a wheelchair in the Paralympics, still an Olympic champion; people like Bill Demby, who lost both his legs serving our country in Vietnam, and is now a member of our Paralympics volleyball team.

All these athletes, each in their own way, and in some special way the members of the Paralympics team, remind us that we all have a lot of important muscles in our body, but the most important muscle we ever use on the field of competition as well as in life is the heart. Having heart means doing the very best we can with our God-given capacity, whatever that is, just like Bonnie Blair said.

If you young people have heart, you will remember the pledge that Buddy Lee got you to make: You'll stay in school; you'll stay drugfree; you'll stay away from gangs and violence; and you'll get into developing your minds and your bodies. If you have heart, you know you can be a better student, a better athlete, a better musician, and you can be a good son or daughter, a good brother or sister, a good friend. If you have heart, you know that you have to respect yourself and others, and you have to show the responsibility that every human being can that makes you a champion.

A lot of heart has gone into putting the Olympics together. In the final weeks, it's all

coming together. There are a lot of people being recognized in the Olympics for what they do every day, not as athletic champions but because they are champion human beings.

Today, this day, in Boulder City, Nevada, a woman named Irene Wisner is carrying the Olympic torch on its way to Opening Day in Atlanta, July 19th. Most of you have probably never heard of Irene Wisner. She won't be in the Olympics, she is 74 years old. The children in Washington, DC, don't know her, but there are 100 children who know her very well, because they were abused children, abandoned children, and no one would take care of them, but this one 74-year-old woman took 100 of these children into her love and life to give them a better chance. And for that service, she was one of many Americans selected to carry the Olympic torch.

There are people like that all around. Just this morning before I came out here, I was with one of your fellow students in Washington, Alicia Brown, a young woman who made a television spot with me about violence because she had lost friends of hers and she was speaking out, not only personally but to all the people of this country against violence against our young people. I thank her for that, and I hope all of you will do that in your individual lives.

I hope you young people will watch this torch as it travels through 42 States and 15,000 miles. It will follow the work of countless volunteers who are trying to make this country better. They've cleaned roads, painted houses, even shuttled neighbors to places where they can see the torch passed. I want you all to cheer on our torchbearers and follow their example by holding high the torch of good citizenship in your own lives.

And that's what I want to say, finally, about these Champions of Life behind me. Yes, they all have succeeded in athletics. Yes, many of them have succeeded against extraordinary odds and every one of them has achieved something extraordinary against the odds. But what they are doing now is in some ways more important because they are trying to set an example for the next generation of champions. We should be grateful to them. And I'd like to ask you to recognize all of

them with a warm round of applause. [Applause]

The America these champions represent is a place where individual dreams must be realized through our common efforts, a place where all Americans who are willing to work hard can succeed, a place where we have different points of view and different heritages, but a place where, like the champions here today, we come together as a team, wearing the colors of liberty and freedom, respecting our honest differences and working together to help each of us clear life's highest hurdles together. One America, good for all, where we all work for the common good. This is the America we want the world to see in Atlanta, and this is the America that we want you young people to grow up in.

Good luck. Good bless you, and God bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:01 p.m. in the stadium at Eastern High School. In his remarks, he referred to Buddy Lee, member, U.S. Greco-Roman wrestling team; Olympic Gold Medalists Bonnie Blair, Al Oerter, and Jeff Blatnick; and Ralph Neal, principal, Eastern High School.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus May 1, 1996

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question. The previous submission covered progress through January 31, 1996. The current submission covers the period February 1, 1996, through March 31, 1996.

In support of the U.N. Secretary General's good office mission on Cyprus, my Administration hopes to be able to take an initiative on Cyprus this year. If the two communities possess sufficient political will to make tradeoffs required for an intercommunal agreement, we believe it should be possible to arrive at a fair and just solution. Attaining this goal requires the active support of Turkey and Greece. Although unavoidable events have delayed the launching of our Cyprus initiative, we have been preparing its

groundwork. In this respect, in March I had a useful session on Cyprus with Turkish President Demirel who expressed his government's desire to be helpful. I plan on engaging other visitors similarly in the lead-up to our Cyprus effort.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Statement on the Family and Medical Leave Act

May 1, 1996

Three years ago, I worked with the Congress to pass the Family and Medical Leave Act so that we could help Americans balance their work and family responsibilities. Americans should not have to choose between their job and caring for a sick child or parent. We said we could do that without hurting businesses, and we were right. Today, a bipartisan commission that studied the act announced its conclusion that this new law has significantly helped working Americans while placing only minimal requirements on their employers.

The commission found that because we have a Family and Medical Leave Act, fewer workers will have to choose between their jobs and their loved ones if a child or elderly parent should need care. That's tremendously important in an era when most households are headed by two working parents or by single mothers.

And as we predicted at the time we fought for this legislation, businesses are finding that the new law is easy to administer and costs are non-existent or small. The majority of leaves are short in duration, and most workers return to their jobs. In fact, some businesses testified to the commission that the new law has helped them reduce employee turnover, enhance productivity, and improve the morale of their workforce.

The Family and Medical Leave Act has brought many Americans a benefit that was once afforded only to a fortunate few—the knowledge that they can return to their jobs

and keep their health benefits if they need unpaid time off to meet medical or family needs. Thanks to the work of this bipartisan commission, we now have further proof of what I have always known: the Family and Medical Leave Act was, and is, the right thing to do for America's working families.

Remarks at the Olympic Dinner

May 1, 1996

Thank you very much. Thank you so much. President Walker, thank you for your remarks and for your work and to Dick Schultz and Jim Hardyman, Steve Green, Anita DeFrantz, and others who are responsible for this dinner tonight. To the Members of Congress who are here, and Mr. Michel, it's good to see you again. I miss you. I'm glad you're here—I'm glad you're here.

I want to thank the Vice President and Mack McLarty for the work they have done on the Olympics and all those others in our administration who have undertaken this endeavor, I must say, with great joy and energy. As the Vice President mentioned, Hillary had the honor of representing our country at the Olympics in Lillehammer and of being in Greece and Olympia with our daughter when the Olympic flame was lit to be brought to the United States. Our experience with the Olympics has been one of the great highlights of our service here in Washington and in this great office.

I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation to the men and women up here on the stage with me, particularly those who were with me today earlier when the Vice President, over at Eastern High School, in the Champions in Life program, for truly so many of them have been an inspiration to young people all across the country who may never be Olympic athletes but can be Olympian in their citizenship and character and the contribution they give to this country, and who drew inspiration and strength from what was said for them today.

I want to thank Billy Payne and Andy Fleming and all those who have worked so hard to make the Atlanta Olympics and the Paralympics a great success, but also those who won the competition for the 100th mod-

ern Olympics to be in Atlanta. It's a great honor for the United States. And when opening day comes, I believe that the United States will measure up to that honor, that the world will see America achieving a new national best.

The spirit of the United States Olympic Committee was basically born with Dr. William Milligan Sloane, who helped to rekindle the modern Olympic Games and who was so dedicated to getting his team to Athens for the 1896 Olympics that he gave up his own ticket, and his wife's, so that the last 2 of the 13 American team members could go. He didn't even get to see the spectacle he had made possible. Now, I know a lot of you have given very generously to these Olympic Games, but at least you're going to get to see them unfold.

The legacy that Dr. Sloan left us has been richly fulfilled by this U.S. Olympic Committee. When our athletes line up at the starting blocks or face off in the wrestlers' circle or the boxing ring or the basketball or the tennis court, we will see the best in the world. But we have to thank not only them for their dedication, their coaches, their trainers, their families, their friends, but also the United States Olympic Committee. Here in America we do it our way, the Government does not finance the Olympic teams. Everyone pitches in and does his or her part, businesses, communities, universities, neighbors, friends, and families.

So not only our athletes but also all of you would have anything to do with the Olympics are part of Team USA, and on behalf of the American people let me thank you for making Team USA possible. We are very proud of you.

Not very long ago I had the privilege to spend a few hours with Billy Payne, walking around the Olympic stadium and some of the facilities and being briefed. Andy Fleming was there, others were there. And I'm telling you they have done a magnificent job down there, and I am in awe of the level of organization, preparation, and execution we are seeing. I am very proud of every aspect of

this Olympics, and I will be bursting with pride when the games begin. I hope in some way I can communicate to the American people and to people all over the world what the spirit and character of the Olympics mean, what the standard of excellence within honorable rules set by these Olympians and the Paralympians mean to the United States.

I also want to thank those who were there with me at Eastern High School today, who reminded those young people that no one really makes it alone and that every achievement is worthy of respect. That's what I want the world to see at the Olympics this summer. And if I could leave you with that thought—you know, when this country gets together, when we reach across all the lines that divide us, when we say, in spite of our differences of color or creed or region or station in life, we really are one nation, helping each other to achieve our individual dreams—when America does that, we are never defeated. And I believe this summer the world will see one America, a place where individual dreams are realized through common efforts, where all Americans who want to work hard are being given a chance to succeed, where different points of view and different heritages are undergirded by shared values that keep this great country strong and secure and give it its character and its future.

I thank you, all of you, for contributing to that and for making America's Team still the envy of the entire world. Good luck and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Leroy Walker, president, and Dick Schultz, executive director, United States Olympic Committee; Anita DeFrantz, member, International Olympic Committee; James F. Hardyman, chairman and CEO of Textron, Inc.; Steve Green, chairman and CEO of Samsonite; Bob Michel, former House minority leader; Billy Payne, chief executive officer, Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games; and G. Andrew Fleming, chief executive officer, Atlanta Paralympic Organizing Committee.

Remarks on Returning Without Approval to the House the Common Sense Product Liability Legal Reform Act of 1996 and an Exchange With Reporters

May 2, 1996

The President. Good afternoon. Before I make the announcement I invited you here for today, I want to congratulate the Department of Justice on the success of the Zorro 2 antinarcotics operation that Attorney General Reno announced a couple of hours ago today.

Zorro 2 targeted a Mexican-run cocaine smuggling and distribution network in the United States and the Colombian cartel with which it worked. It dismantled both the organization that owned the cocaine and the organization that ran the transportation system, locking up more than 100 individuals across the country, seizing almost 6,000 kilograms of cocaine and a thousand pounds of marijuana.

Critical to the success of this multi-State operation which is a part of our southwest border initiative was the cooperation of over 40 State and local police agencies, the DEA, the FBI, and several other Federal agencies all across the country. They combined their resources and their expertise to take down this extensive drug organization.

Today's arrests are another big victory in the fight against illegal drugs, the fight to keep them off our streets and out of the hands of our children. On behalf of the American people I want to thank our law enforcement officers for a job well done.

Today I am returning to Congress without my signature the product liability legislation sent to me this week. I take this step because I believe this bill tilts against American families and would deprive them of the ability to recover fully when they are injured by a defective product.

I am eager to sign legislation to make our legal system work better at less cost in a fairer way. But this bill would hurt families without truly improving our legal system. It would mean more unsafe products in our homes. It would let wrongdoers off the hook. I cannot allow it to become law.

One of my duties as President is to protect the health and safety of our people. Parents should know the toys their children play with are safe. Families should know the cars they drive will not explode upon impact. Our grandparents have a right to know the drugs and the medical devices they use will not injure them. It is a hallmark of our system of justice that when a product produces injury or death a family has the right to try and recover its losses. And if someone endangers the health of the public, he or she should be held responsible. I believe we can protect these rights even as we curb frivolous lawsuits.

Let me be clear: We do need legal reform. America's legal system is too expensive, too time-consuming, and does—does—contain too many frivolous lawsuits.

As Governor of Arkansas, I signed several tort reform bills into law. In 1994, I signed legislation in this room to limit the liability of aircraft manufacturers in what I thought was a reasonable and prudent way. We've worked hard to lift the burden of regulation and redtape from business. We cut 16,000 pages of Federal rules, giving a break to small businesses and working for results. I believe we can help the business community in this country without hurting ordinary Americans. But any legal reform must be carefully crafted so that the interest of consumers and businesses are fairly balanced.

For a year I tried to work with Congress to write such a balanced bill. I made it very clear what I would accept in such legislation and what I could not support. When the United States Senate passed product liability legislation, it was clearly an improvement over a much more extreme House bill. I still had a couple of objections to it, which I made very clear. And I expressed the hope that in the conference we could resolve those objections so that a bill would be sent to me that I could sign.

Instead, in the conference, the bill moved back toward the House bill in a couple of respects, and perhaps even worse, included some things which were not included in either the Senate or the House bill, but, as too often happens in Washington, were put into the final conference version.

This bill is opposed by the American Cancer Society, the Heart Association, the Lung Association, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and our friend, Sarah Brady—where is she, behind me—and the handgun control people. It is opposed by every major consumer and senior citizen group. It is opposed by State legislators and State judges. I'm proud to be joined today by the attorney general of Mississippi, Mike Moore, who opposes it. These are mainstream, Main Street groups, and I believe they are right.

The legislation would make it impossible for some people to recover fully for non-economic damages. This is especially unfair to senior citizens, women, children who have few economic damages, and poor people who may suffer grievously but because their incomes are low have few economic damages. It would arbitrarily cap punitive damages which are paid by a corporation that has engaged in egregious conduct, such as knowingly making or selling the public a dangerous product. A cap on punitive damages can reward wrongdoers and diminish the deterrent impact of punitive damages.

And if a jury, for example—and many juries are being asked to consider this today—should ever issue a finding that tobacco companies have been not truthful with their customers, this legislation would limit the ability of juries to impose punitive damages on those companies.

And in a provision added in the conference, the legislation would bar the courthouse door to some consumers altogether if they are unlucky enough to be hurt by a product that is 15 years old, even if it's supposed to last more than 15 years. That is the case with two of the people who are in this room today. In the worst provision added to the conference, it would bail out a gun dealer, for example, who knowingly sells a felon a gun or a bar owner who knowingly sells a drunk another beer before he or she hits the road. And I might say, that is why Sarah Brady is here today.

This was supposed to be a product liability bill. This provision has nothing—I reiterate—nothing to do with the manufacture of products that subsequently prove defective and injure people. It shouldn't even be in this bill, and that is probably why it was

put in at the 11th hour in the conference without any hearing in the Senate or the House.

I should also point out that there has been a lot of talk in this Congress about the importance of giving responsibilities back to the States. That apparently does not apply to laws relating to the civil justice system. This bill overrides the laws of all 50 States, in spite of the fact that 40 of the 50 States in the last 10 years have acted on their own to reform the tort laws, and more than 30 of them have acted in the area of product liability.

So it seems that the Congress is willing to override State laws if they conflict with this bill but only, I might add, if the State laws are more favorable to the consumers. Now, if the State laws are less favorable to the consumers than this bill, they can stand.

This legislation is arcane, complex; it has a lot of legalisms and loopholes in it. But the real fact is it could have a devastating impact on innocent Americans who can presently look to our system of justice for recovery. Several of them are with me today.

Janey Fair lost a daughter when her school bus burst into flames because the manufacturer wouldn't install an inexpensive safety measure. The bus was hit by a drunk driver with no money. Because she could rely on joint and several liability she could bring a lawsuit. This is the sort of thing that would be changed, as it relates to noneconomic damages, in this law.

The problem is that children have hardly any economic damages. They're not out there earning money. Poor people may have just as much life expectancy left as you or I, but their economic damages would not be as great, no matter how great their human loss.

Carla Miller was left with her children after her husband was killed when his tractor rolled over. Jeanne Yanta lost the ability to have children after she used a contraceptive that the manufacturer knew was dangerous. Every one of these people is a hard-working American citizen who is law-abiding, tried to do the right thing by their families. Every one would have been prevented from fully recovering for their losses, or in some cases, those who committed civil wrongs would escape full punishment if this bill were to become law.

I continue to believe that if we were to work together in a bipartisan and open fashion we can craft the right kind of legal reform. I am still willing to do it. Congress knows well my specific positions. If it will send me a balanced bill that cuts back on frivolous lawsuits while being fair to families, that gives manufacturers more predictability but doesn't bail out real wrongdoers, I would sign such a bill without hesitation.

But this bill does not do that. And because of the changes that were made in the Senate bill moving away from rather than toward the specifics that I asked for and because of things that were put into the conference that were not even a part of the House bill, much less the Senate bill, I have no choice but to veto it. And that is what I have done today.

Product Liability Veto

Q. Mr. President, I'm sure you've heard that the Republicans are heaping criticism upon you, saying this veto is a payback to the Trial Lawyers Association whose members have contributed heavily to your reelection. Your response?

The President. Well, I know they've said that. I think you should go back to them and ask them how they could justify depriving Americans who are just like these people of the right to recover for their injuries. And ask them if they really believe that our economy is so fragile that we have to strip from these people the right to be made whole in order to continue to make our economy go forward.

Just today, we learned that in the last quarter our economy grew at 2.8 percent. We have the lowest unemployment of any advanced economy in the world except for Japan. And many people believe as a practical matter it's even lower than that nation's. I do not believe that we have to have a legal system which shuts the door on the legitimate problems of ordinary people in order to get rid of frivolous lawsuits and excess legal expenses. And I think that we ought to ask those folks that.

You know, before I got into being an elected official, I taught law. I studied the Constitution. I have sat in courtrooms and seen the faces of people who come in there full of fear, full of uncertainty, and full of their

own hurts. And so it just seems to me that before they notch this one up as a special interest vote, I would just say two things: One is I made it clear that I would sign legislation that the Trial Lawyers Association did not agree with. I made that abundantly clear. I made my position clear. Two, what is their answer? Can they really look at these people in the face and say, "Boy, our economy needs it so badly that I don't want anybody who's like you in the future to be able to recover and be made whole the way you were."

And if they—I'll be glad to have the special interest discussion with them if they first say, "It is fine with me if these people, people just like these people, in the future cannot be made whole." They need to answer on the merits before they get to the accusations.

Gas Tax

Q. Your critics say that you're resisting cutting the gas tax. Is that accurate?

The President. Well, first of all, I believe that the better tax cut for Americans is to give people a deduction for the cost of education after high school and to give them a deduction for the cost of raising their children. It's a lot more money. And it's for a more compelling reason.

The gas tax did not drive up the cost of gasoline. After the gas tax was put in and all dedicated to deficit reduction in 1993, gas continued to go down for a year. And we have taken steps to bring the price of gasoline down. We are moving aggressively on that, and it's beginning to work.

Now if the Congress wants to repeal the gas tax, then it ought to be done—I'll say again—in the context of deficit reduction. They ought to come in here, and we ought to figure out what our balanced budget plan is. We ought to put our common savings together. We ought to have a tax program—a tax relief program—that we can afford, and we ought to do it. I would be happy to talk with them about this.

But I think just to sort of out of the blue say we're going to add \$30 billion to the deficit instead of talking about what the best kind of tax relief for America's families is and how we're going to do it in the context of balancing the budget is not a responsible thing to do. But I'm happy to talk to them about

it. But we have to do it, aware of its consequences and of the choices which it will impose upon us. And I think we ought to come in and start these budget discussions, and if they want that to be a part of it, it's fine with me. I'll be glad to talk to them. I'm not shutting the door on that.

Budget Negotiations

Q. Mr. President, in that vein, you've been keeping up pressure on Senator Dole now for a least a good week to come in here and talk with you about the balanced budget. Why isn't that working, would you say? How long are you going to keep—

The President. Well, I don't know. You'd have to ask him that, because, if you remember, the first day I asked for them all to participate again, he suggested that the two of us ought to do it, and then through Mr. Panetta, I accepted. So I'm to willing to meet with them under any circumstances and try to get—I'll meet with him alone; I'll meet with the leadership; I'll meet with a bipartisan, broader group. I just think that we need to understand that whenever we have worked together, good things have happened.

You look at the—we've got the telecommunications bill. We've got the terrorism bill. We got this year's budget. I would have signed a budget I signed last week on the first day of the budget year, 6, 7 months ago. We've got the bill on lobbying reform. Whenever we work together, we can still make good things happen, and we don't need a work stoppage here before the election. And we don't need bills just to be—we don't bill, veto, bill, veto, bill, veto. We need to work together and pass legislation that I can sign and keep moving the country forward. Then we'll have conventions this summer, and there will be lots of times for the campaign.

Press Secretary Mike McCurry. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. I'll take one more.

Product Liability Veto

Q. Mr. President, you just suggested you would not sign this bill in part because it would overrule the 50 State laws, but wouldn't any product liability reform overrule the—

The President. Yes, it would. But I want to point out, it's different from like the securities law issue where, essentially, I approved the bill except for the changes that were made in the conference that nobody ever debated. And I made that clear. And that's an area of Federal law.

There is a general feeling among people around the country that there are too many frivolous lawsuits. The only point I'm making is that the States have moved to try to address this. As a result of that, there have been 40 States that have acted in the area of tort reform. And I believe this is right. There may be more, but there have been at least 30 States that have specifically taken action in the area of product liability.

I just pointed out that it is ironic that the Congress which said that what it wanted to do was to give power away from the States, in this area wants to take the power away from the States. At least they want to take it away one way.

Yes, if you have any Federal standards, they will, to some extent, erode State law. I'm prepared to do that to a limited extent to get rid of frivolous lawsuits. But I think we ought to be aware of the fact that this country has functioned pretty well for 200 years by being very reluctant to do that and letting the States handle that area of our law.

Now in areas of national commerce, like the securities laws, the Federal Government has been very active. In other areas, the Federal Government hasn't been so active. So it just is another argument for being careful in this area.

It's not like the States have been asleep for the last decade. It's not like they never debated this, not like they never made any decisions. They've been quite active in this area. We can go further. I am prepared to do it. But I think—I am just bringing it out as a reason for further caution.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:43 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Message on Returning Without Approval to the House of Representatives the Common Sense Product Liability Legal Reform Act of 1996

May 2, 1996

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 956, the "Common Sense Product Liability Legal Reform Act of 1996."

I support real commonsense product liability reform. To deserve that label, however, legislation must adequately protect the interests of consumers, in addition to the interests of manufacturers and sellers. Further, the legislation must respect the important role of the States in our Federal system. The Congress could have passed such legislation, appropriately limited in scope and balanced in application, meeting these tests. Had the Congress done so, I would have signed the bill gladly. The Congress, however, chose not to do so, deciding instead to retain provisions in the bill that I made clear I could not accept.

This bill inappropriately intrudes on State authority, and does so in a way that tilts the legal playing field against consumers. While some Federal action in this area is proper because no one State can alleviate nationwide problems in the tort system, the States should have, as they always have had, primary responsibility for tort law. The States traditionally have handled this job well, serving as laboratories for new ideas and making needed reforms. This bill unduly interferes with that process in products cases; moreover, it does so in a way that peculiarly disadvantages consumers. As a rule, this bill displaces State law only when that law is more favorable to consumers; it defers to State law when that law is more helpful to manufacturers and sellers. I cannot accept, absent compelling reasons, such a one-way street of federalism.

Apart from this general problem of displacing State authority in an unbalanced manner, specific provisions of H.R. 956 unfairly disadvantage consumers and their families. Consumers should be able to count on the safety of the products they purchase. And if these products are defective and cause

harm, consumers should be able to get adequate compensation for their losses. Certain provisions in this bill work against these goals, preventing some injured persons from recovering the full measure of their damages and increasing the possibility that defective goods will come onto the market as a result of intentional misconduct.

In particular, I object to the following provisions of the bill, which subject consumers to too great a risk of harm.

First, as I previously have stated, I oppose wholly eliminating joint liability of noneconomic damages such as pain and suffering because such a change would prevent many persons from receiving full compensation for injury. When one wrongdoer cannot pay its portion of the judgment, the other wrongdoers, and not the innocent victim, should have to shoulder that part of the award. Traditional law accomplishes this result. In contrast, this bill would leave the victim to bear these damages on his or her own. Given how often companies that manufacture defective products go bankrupt, this provision has potentially large consequences.

This provision is all the more troubling because it unfairly discriminates against the most vulnerable members of our society—the elderly, the poor, children, and nonworking women—whose injuries often involve mostly noneconomic losses. There is no reason for this kind of discrimination. Noneconomic damages are as real and as important to victims as economic damages. We should not create a tort system in which people with the greatest need of protection stand the least chance of receiving it.

Second, as I also have stated, I oppose arbitrary ceilings on punitive damages, because they endanger the safety of the public. Capping punitive damages undermines their very purpose, which is to punish and thereby deter egregious misconduct. The provision of the bill allowing judges to exceed the cap if certain factors are present helps to mitigate, but does not cure this problem, given the clear intent of the Congress, as expressed in the Statement of Managers, that judges should use this authority only in the most unusual cases.

In addition, I am concerned that the Conference Report fails to fix an oversight in title

II of the bill, which limits actions against suppliers of materials used in devices implanted in the body. In general, title II is a laudable attempt to ensure the supply of materials needed to make life-saving medical devices, such as artificial heart valves. But as I believe even many supporters of the bill agree, a supplier of materials who knew or should have known that the materials, as implanted, would cause injury should not receive any protection from suit. Title II's protections must be clearly limited to nonnegligent suppliers.

My opposition to these Senate-passed provisions were known prior to the Conference on the bill. But instead of addressing these issues, the Conference Committee took several steps backward in the direction of the bill approved by the House.

First, the Conference Report seems to expand the scope of the bill, inappropriately applying the limits on punitive and non-economic damages to lawsuits, where, for example, a gun dealer has knowingly sold a gun to a convicted felon or a bar owner has knowingly served a drink to an obviously inebriated customer. I believe that such suits should go forward unhindered. Some in the Congress have argued that the change made in Conference is technical in nature, so that the bill still exempts these actions. But I do not read the change in this way—and in any event, I do not believe that a victim of a drunk driver should have to argue in court about this matter. The Congress should not have made this last-minute change, creating this unfortunate ambiguity, in the scope of the bill.

In addition, the Conference Report makes certain changes that, though sounding technical, may cut off a victim's ability to sue a negligent manufacturer. The Report deletes a provision that would have stopped the statute of limitations from running when a bankruptcy court issues the automatic stay that prevents suits from being filed during bankruptcy proceedings. The effect of this seemingly legalistic change will be that some persons harmed by companies that have entered bankruptcy proceedings (as makers of defective products often do) will lose any meaningful opportunity to bring valid claims.

Similarly, the Conference Report reduces the statute of repose to 15 years (and less if States so provide) and applies the statute to a wider range of goods, including handguns. This change, which bars a suit against a maker of an older product even if that product has just caused injury, also will preclude some valid suits.

In recent weeks, I have heard from many victims of defective products whose efforts to recover compensation would have been frustrated by this bill. I have heard from a woman who would not have received full compensatory damages under this bill for the death of a child because one wrongdoer could not pay his portion of the judgment. I have heard from women whose suits against makers of defective contraceptive devices—and the punitive damages awarded in those suits—forced the products off the market, in a way that this bill's cap on punitives would make much harder. I have heard from persons injured by products more than 15 years old, who under this bill could not bring suit at all.

Injured people cannot be left to suffer in this fashion; furthermore, the few companies that cause these injuries cannot be left, through lack of a deterrent, to engage in misconduct. I therefore must return the bill that has been presented to me. This bill would undermine the ability of courts to provide relief to victims of harmful products and thereby endanger the health and safety of the entire American public. There is nothing common sense about such reforms to product liability law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
May 2, 1996.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

May 2, 1996

Budget Negotiations

The President. I'd like to make a couple of brief opening remarks, and then I'd like to let Senator Chafee and Senator Breaux say whatever they'd like to say. And then after

the meeting, after we've had a chance to visit, I may want to say some other things. But I'd like to say less of and more now, and perhaps more afterward.

First, I want to thank this group of Senators for coming to the White House. This has been a good day for our country. We've got some good economic news. We found that the American economy is continuing to grow steadily and without inflation and better than had been expected. But even though we have over 8 million jobs and low inflation and strong growth, we know that if we want to continue this we have got to finish the work of balancing the budget, and we have to do it in 7 years and in a bipartisan way.

In a very real sense for the next several months we will have to face the choice in more than one area between partisanship and progress. But if you look at what has happened in this Congress that is really good, and a lot has happened that is good—the telecommunications bill, the antiterrorism bill, the budget bill that I signed just a few days ago, the lobby reform bill; in the Senate, the passage of 100 to nothing of the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill, and then the passage, I think 97 to 3, just before you came over here, of the immigration bill sponsored by Senator Simpson—in every case these things have happened because there was bipartisan cooperation, the people put the interest of the country first.

That is what works. And that is what we're going to have to do to with this budget. So I'm proud to be here with these Senators today. I commend them for what they are doing. I hope it will become the model for what Congress does on this, and I hope it will bring us to a genuinely bipartisan balanced budget. And I'm encouraged, and I'm anxious to get down to the discussion.

Senator Chafee?

Senator Chafee. Well, thank you first, Mr. President. Thank you very much for inviting us down. We appreciate that. This whole group—Senator Dole has invited us to meet with him in a similar fashion next Tuesday, and we all intend to do that, likewise. This is truly a bipartisan group, as you have mentioned.

We are brought together by a desire to get a balanced budget, not just in the 7th

year, but in the out-years likewise. And we feel very strong. This is not a negotiating group. We're not negotiators on behalf of anybody in the Congress. We have come up with a plan, a bipartisan plan, which we've arrived at after considerable effort, and I want to commend Senator Breau and all who are associated with him. We think there's a very, very fair budget proposal that we've worked out. And we commend it to you, and we'll have a chance to present it in greater detail as we proceed.

Senator Breau. Mr. President, we're delighted to be here at your invitation to meet with you and to present what I think is very unique. This is truly a very unique coalition of 11 Democrats working together with 11 Republicans who have come together to present to you and to the administration and to our colleagues a 7-year balanced budget which brings about real reform in areas of welfare and Medicaid and Medicare, as well as a tax cut for individuals and working families.

We think that working from the center out is the way to solve these problems. We've had 2 Government partial shutdowns last year and 13 continuing resolutions. That's not the way to balance the budget. We offer this as a hopeful suggestion as the way we should go about getting it down.

The President. Thank you very much.

Q. Senators Breau and Chafee, will you have a cut in the gas tax as a part of your plan to balance the budget?

Senator Breau. That's not part of our plan.

Senator Chafee. That's not part of this plan.

Q. Any tax cuts at all as part of this—

Senator Chafee. Yes, we have a tax cut proposal in our plan.

Q. Can you tell us more about the Medicare and welfare proposals?

Senator Chafee. Well, I don't think we want to get into this in piecemeal.

The President. We'll all have more to say. We want to talk first.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Statement on Senate Action on the
“Immigration Control and Financial
Responsibility Act of 1996”**

May 2, 1996

The Senate has taken an important step today by passing with bipartisan support the Immigration Control and Financial Responsibility Act of 1996, important legislation which ratifies my administration's comprehensive immigration strategy to reverse decades of neglect and restore the rule of law to our immigration system.

This bill builds upon the historic progress we are making. Over the last 3 years, I have directed my administration to use every tool at its disposal to crack down on illegal immigration and to reintroduce the rule of law at the border and in the workplace. We have made illegal crossings at the Southwest border tougher than ever before by increasing manpower by 50 percent and employing state-of-the-art technology. We are deporting record numbers of criminal and other illegal aliens from the United States, and we have put teeth into our immigration laws in the workplace. Earlier this year, I signed an Executive order barring employers who knowingly hire illegal workers from receiving Federal contracts.

I am pleased that the Senate has endorsed our strategy with legislation that answers my administration's call for tougher penalties for alien smugglers, criminal aliens, and manufacturers and sellers of fraudulent documents. The Senate bill also supports our plan to continue to increase the size of our Border Patrol and provides the Justice Department with new tools to fight illegal immigration. While this bill strongly supports our enforcement efforts, it still goes too far in denying legal immigrants access to vital safety net programs which could jeopardize public health and safety. Some work still needs to be done. I urge the Congress to move quickly to finalize and send me this key legislation.

**Statement on the Initiative To
Reduce Tobacco Use**

May 2, 1996

Smoking is a pediatric disease that shows no sign of abating, in part because young people are constantly barraged by messages that glamour and grit can be found in pack of cigarettes.

My administration has proposed the Nation's first comprehensive initiative to reduce children's use of tobacco products. But Government cannot solve this problem alone. Everybody must do their share to help parents keep their kids tobacco-free.

I applaud 3M Media for accepting responsibility for the impact billboards have. We must all work together to protect our children from the lures of tobacco.

**Statement on Senate Passage of the
Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS
Resources Emergency Act**

May 2, 1996

I applaud the Members of Congress for this overwhelming statement of support for the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act. By extending this vital program for 5 additional years, lawmakers of both parties are sending a message of support to thousands of Americans who are living with HIV or AIDS and to their families and friends who offer them love and support each and every day. In its first 5 years of existence, the Ryan White CARE Act has provided high-quality medical care and support services that help to extend the length and improve the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS. I have been proud of our recent success in increasing funding for this program by more than 110 percent in the last 3 years, including a \$105 million increase in the recently enacted budget agreement for fiscal year 1996. I look forward to signing this bill and continuing this record of bipartisan support.

Remarks at a Dinner Honoring Billy and Ruth Graham

May 2, 1996

Good evening. The first time I ever met Paul Harvey, he and his son played through a foursome I was in on his golf course in Chicago. He never told me the score. But since then he's tried to tell me the score about a lot of other things. *[Laughter]* And I've enjoyed it every time.

To the members of the Graham family, the Members of Congress who are here, ladies and gentlemen: I'm deeply honored to join with you tonight in honoring two of America's finest citizens, two of the world's greatest human resources, Billy and Ruth Graham.

When Billy and Ruth received the Congressional Gold Medal today, they received only the 114th medal in the 220-year history of this country. Since, as Paul Harvey said, George Washington started receiving the first one in 1776, Thomas Edison, Marian Anderson, Elie Wiesel, Winston Churchill—Billy and Ruth Graham belong in their company, and more.

I am going to make a presentation in a moment related to that, but I wanted to say a few words first. I'm very proud that Billy and Ruth have decided to share this honor with the Billy and Ruth Graham children's center of Memorial Mission Hospital in Asheville, North Carolina.

In Galatians 6, St. Paul said that while each of us must make our own efforts to sustain ourselves, we are also reminded to "bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." Sharing this medal in this way does that. But in so many ways Billy and Ruth have fulfilled the law of Christ, in the ministry of the Word going into all nations.

I hardly ever go to a place, as President, Billy Graham hadn't been there before me preaching. *[Laughter]* And I feel like a poor substitute from time to time, because a lot of the time what I'm trying to do is get people to lay down the hatreds of the heart and reach down into their spirit and treat people who are different from them with the same dignity that all God's children are entitled to.

Billy and Ruth have practiced the ministry of the deed. Hundreds of times the Bible

calls upon us to minister to the poor and the needy as they did in trying to help disaster victims in Guatemala and countless other places. And I know yesterday Billy and I were talking about how proud he was of the work that his son, Franklin, has done, and I saw some of that when I sent our troops into Bosnia and I met some people who had worked with Franklin Graham to try to help the poor children in that war-torn land.

Billy and Ruth Graham have practiced the ministry of good citizenship, being friends with Presidents of both parties, counseling them in countless ways, always completely private, always completely genuine. Yesterday we sat in the Oval Office reminiscing and talking about current circumstances, and I asked for Billy Graham's prayers for the wisdom and guidance of God. That is a part of his ministry as well.

Perhaps the most moving example of that came when Billy Graham spoke along with me and a number of others at the first service shortly after the bombing in Oklahoma City. And he knew he was speaking to a vast array of people who had been wounded by that incident. Most of them were Christians, but not all of them were. And yet he sought to speak to all of them, and he gave what I thought was one of the most honest messages I had ever heard a minister of the Word give. And I thought to myself as I watched him give it that only a man completely convicted, completely secure in his own faith, could have looked out at that vast wounded array of human beings and said, "I wish I could tell you that I understand completely why things like this happen. But I don't. Even after all these years, I don't. I don't know why this happened. I don't have an explanation for it. But the God we love is a God of love and mercy amidst all the suffering we are asked to endure. We are not supposed to understand everything but instead to lean on God."

And he made it more powerful because he was able to say to his fellow Americans, "Even after all these years, after I have searched the Scriptures and prayed for wisdom, I do not understand everything. I cannot explain this, but that makes the case for our faith even stronger." I'll remember that for as long as I live.

Finally, I thank Billy Graham and Ruth Graham for the ministry of their life and their personal example, for their extraordinary achievement of 5 children, 19 grandchildren, and I think now 8 great-grandchildren. If that achievement could be mirrored by every adult in America, we would have about 10 percent of the problems we've got today in this great country of ours.

I thank them for countless personal gestures that demonstrate that as private people they are what they seem to be in public. I thank them for always doing things that will enable them to minister to people they may not even know. I have said this in public before, but I want to say it again. When I was a small boy, about 12 years old, Billy Graham came to Little Rock, Arkansas, to preach a crusade. That town was torn part by racial conflict. Our high schools were closed there, and there were those who asked Billy Graham to segregate his audience in War Memorial Stadium so as not to roil the waters.

And I'll never forget that he said—and it was in the paper—that if he had to speak the Word of God to a segregated audience, he would violate his ministry, and he would not do it. And at the most intense time in the modern history of my State, everybody caved, and blacks and whites together poured into the football stadium. And when the invitation was given, they poured down together, down the aisles, and they forgot that they were supposed to be mad at each other, angry at each other, that one was supposed to consider the other somehow less than equal.

And he never preached a word about integrating the schools. He preached the Word of God, and he lived it by the power of his example. And one young boy from a modest family for a long time thereafter took just a little money out of his allowance every month and sent it to Billy Graham's Crusade. And I've lived with that all my life.

I'll never forget that when Billy Graham came back to Little Rock 30 years later, probably the most well-known man of God and faith in the world, he took time out one day to let me take him to see my pastor who he'd known 30 years before, because he was dying. And my elderly pastor, with only a few weeks to live, sat and talked to Billy Graham

about their life, their work, their trips to the Holy Land, and the life to come. There was no one there. There were no cameras; there were no reporters; there was nothing to be gained. It was a simple, private, personal expression of common Christianity and gratitude for the life of a person who had given his life for their shared faith.

And finally, he got up to go. Billy looked at my pastor, W.O. Vaught, shriveled to less than 100 pounds, and he said, "Smile, W.O., next time I see you we'll be outside the Eastern Gates." I'll never forget that as long as I live.

So the Congress did a great thing; you have done a great thing; Billy and Ruth Graham have done a great thing in sharing this award with future generations of people who will need their help and their ministry even after they have passed their time on this Earth. For all that, as President and in my personal role as a citizen and a Christian, I am profoundly grateful.

I'd like Reverend Graham to come out now, and I will give him a copy of the bill which I signed and the pen with which I signed it. And perhaps he'd like to say a word to you tonight.

Billy.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:08 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Renaissance Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to radio commentator Paul Harvey.

Statement on Signing Technical Corrections to the Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act of 1996

May 2, 1996

Today I have signed into law Senate Joint Resolution 53 ("Resolution"). This Resolution makes technical corrections to Public Law 104-134, the "Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act of 1996" ("Act"), which I signed into law on April 26, 1996.

Two of the corrections merit comment.

The Resolution repeals two paragraphs relating to the Tongass National Forest, which were mistakenly not deleted when the operative language was moved to another section.

The Resolution also includes the repeal of section 21104 of the Act, which relates to international population assistance programs and which was inadvertently included in the Act. Nevertheless, I believe that the level of funding that the Congress has provided for FY 1996 for these programs remains inadequate, given the critical importance of these services to protecting the health of women, strengthening families, and preventing unwanted pregnancies and abortions. I regret that the House and Senate were unable to come to an agreement to lift the severe limitations placed on U.S. programs by the FY 1996 Foreign Operations appropriations act. It is my hope that the Congress will remove these limitations and provide full funding for these programs in the FY 1997 appropriations process.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
May 2, 1996.

NOTE: S.J. Res. 53, approved May 2, was assigned Public Law No. 104-140. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 3.

Proclamation 6891—Labor History Month, 1996

May 3, 1996

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

In the early 1900s, millions of Americans left their farms to begin new lives as factory workers. Sadly, many of these citizens found neither secure employment nor higher wages at their new jobs, and the industrial economy brought them exploitation, continued poverty, and the risk of injury and death. No student of American history can forget the images of filthy children emerging from mills and mines, the stories of terrible fires and explosions, or the grim legacy of the slums that grew up in factory towns.

Although child labor, sweatshops, and workplace disasters are largely horrors of the past, efforts to eliminate them began to suc-

ceed only after workers organized and spoke with a united, independent voice. The American labor movement helped the first generation of industrial employees to express their aspirations and insecurities, empowering them with the necessary tools to define the terms and conditions of their employment and to expand the role of labor in the larger society.

As we approach the 21st century, our Nation's economy is undergoing a transformation as momentous as the change that spurred the exodus from farms to factories 100 years ago. And in facing the challenges posed by global competition and rapid technological advances, the workers of the Information Age need the same effective leadership that allowed their forbears to succeed. Each new generation of workers must embrace the activism that has characterized labor's rich history, and all Americans should recognize the role that labor has played in the continuing progress of our democracy.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 1996, as Labor History Month. I call upon Government officials, educators, the media, and all the people of the United States to observe this month with ceremonies, activities, and programs that encourage reflection on the labor movement's heritage and its many contributions to the creation and maintenance of a just America.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 6, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on May 7.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

April 28

In the afternoon in the Map Room, the President provided a videotaped deposition for the ongoing trial in Little Rock, AR.

In the late evening, the President met with Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel in the Oval Office.

April 29

In the morning, the President traveled to Miami, FL. In the late evening, he departed for Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

April 30

In an afternoon ceremony in the Oval Office, the President received diplomatic credentials from the following Ambassadors: Nagora Bogan of Papua New Guinea, Dato Dali Mahmud Hashim of Malaysia, Mahdi Ibrahim Mohamed of Sudan, Pedro Miguel Lamport Kelsall of Guatemala, Theogene Rudashingwa of Rwanda, Bhekh Bahadur Thapa of Nepal, Bulat K. Nurgaliyev of Kazakhstan, Banny de Brum of the Marshall Islands, Jaakko Tapani Laajava of Finland, Naresh Chandra of India, and Dieudonne-Antoine Ganga of the Congo.

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton attended a dinner for supporters of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission in the State Dining Room.

The President announced his intention to nominate Vicky A. Bailey as a member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

May 1

The President announced his intention to appoint Peggy Weil Steine to the Advisory Committee on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jack W. Theimer to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Avis T. Bohlen as Ambassador to

Bulgaria, Anne W. Patterson as Ambassador to El Salvador, John Francis Maisto as Ambassador to Venezuela, and Marisa Lino as Ambassador to Albania.

May 2

In the morning, the President attended a memorial service in Potomac, MD, for David Ifshin, former general counsel for the President's 1992 campaign committee, who died April 30. In the early afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

May 3

In the morning, the President met with Secretary of Defense William Perry and military leaders in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to nominate Brooksley Elizabeth Born as Commissioner and Chair of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The President announced his intention to reappoint Joel I. Ferguson, Dennis DeConcini, Harriet F. Woods, James B. Nutter, Sr., and Jerry M. Hultin as members of the Board of Directors of the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jerry M. Melillo as Associate Director for Environment at the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jeffrey Orseck as a member of the Panama Canal Consultative Committee.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted April 29

Avis T. Bohlen, of the District of Columbia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United

States of America to the Republic of Bulgaria.

Marisa R. Lino,
of Oregon, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Albania.

John Francis Maisto,
of Pennsylvania, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Venezuela.

Anne W. Patterson,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of El Salvador.

Submitted May 1

Mary Lucille Jordan,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission for a term of 6 years expiring August 30, 2002 (reappointment).

Submitted May 3

Michael Kantor,
of California, to be Secretary of Commerce, vice Ronald H. Brown, deceased, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Brooksley Elizabeth Born,
of the District of Columbia, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for the remainder of the term expiring April 13, 1999, vice Mary L. Schapiro, resigned.

Brooksley Elizabeth Born,
of the District of Columbia, to be Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, vice Mary L. Schapiro, resigned.

David D. Spears,
of Kansas, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for the

term expiring April 13, 2000, vice Sheila C. Bair, resigned.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released April 28

Announcement on the President's videotaped deposition for the ongoing trial in Little Rock, AR

Released April 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Director of National Drug Control Policy Barry McCaffrey on the National Drug Control Strategy

Released April 30

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry condemning renewed fighting in Liberia

Fact sheet on counterterrorism

Released May 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on North Korean nuclear fuel

Released May 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Adviser Laura D'Andrea Tyson, Secretary of Commerce Mickey Kantor, Under Secretary of the Treasury Larry Summers, and Council of Economic Advisers member Alicia Munnell on the economy

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on National Security Adviser Anthony Lake's May 1 meeting with Capt. Kojo Tsikata, spe-

cial envoy from President Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana

Released May 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin, and Council of Economic Advisers member Martin Bailey on the economy

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on progress in the Guatemalan peace process

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved April 30

H.R. 255 / Public Law 104-135
To designate the Federal Justice Building in Miami, Florida, as the "James Lawrence King Federal Justice Building"

H.R. 869 / Public Law 104-136
To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 125 Market

Street in Youngstown, Ohio, as the "Thomas D. Lambros Federal Building and United States Courthouse"

H.R. 1804 / Public Law 104-137
To designate the United States Post Office-Courthouse located at South 6th and Rogers Avenue, Fort Smith, Arkansas, as the "Judge Isaac C. Parker Federal Building"

H.R. 2415 / Public Law 104-138
To designate the United States Customs Administrative Building at the Ysleta/Zaragosa Port of Entry located at 797 South Zaragosa Road in El Paso, Texas, as the "Timothy C. McCaghren Customs Administrative Building"

H.R. 2556 / Public Law 104-139
To redesignate the Federal building located at 345 Middlefield Road in Menlo Park, California, and known as the Earth Sciences and Library Building, as the "Vincent E. McKelvey Federal Building"

Approved May 2

S.J. Res. 53 / Public Law 104-140
Making corrections to Public Law 104-134